The Sketch

No. 2519—Vol. CXCIV. WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 1941. ONE SHILLING AND THREEPENCE.

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN: A KELLY ROYAL ACADEMY PORTRAIT.

This year's Royal Academy, the second since the outbreak of war, contains four portraits of HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN *by* GERALD KELLY, R.A.—*three small full-length and one large three-quarter-length, all posed in evening dress. This painting shows her in a white satin crinoline looped with flowers, wearing the Order of the Garter, a fine diamond tiara and pearls.*

FROM THE PICTURE BY GERALD KELLY, R.A. COPYRIGHT RESERVED FOR THE OWNER OR ARTIST BY "THE ROYAL ACADEMY ILLUSTRATED."

MOTLEY NOTES.

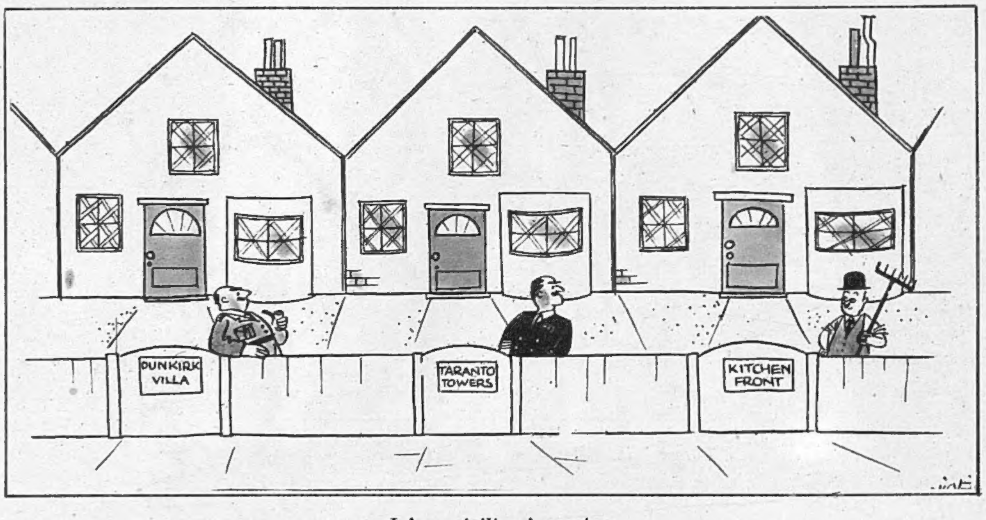
By ALAN KEMP.

Of Making Books. Neither statistics nor statisticians cause me, as a rule, unalloyed delight, but I am always interested in the figures of book production, for they always contain some surprises about the tastes and preoccupations of that mysterious body, the "reading public." The difficulties of publication in present circumstances are enormous, and no doubt in the present year, under total warfare, there will be a heavy diminution of printed matter. But 1940 was not an easy year, either, and it is astonishing to find that during that year 11,000 editions of books (which means millions of actual volumes) were published; and this is only some 4000 fewer than in 1939. What is even more remarkable is that America, in peace conditions, and with a population three times as large as ours, published almost exactly the same number of editions in 1940. Now America is a highly educated country, with a low rate of illiteracy and a vast "reading public"; and the figures mean that though a very large number of Americans read constantly, they do not read books. Newspapers and periodicals are their pabulum; and when you see a Sunday edition of an American newspaper, you realise that there is no danger of mental inanition.

"What do you do with your old razor blades, Henderson?"
"I use them for shaving."

DRAWN BY L. B. MARTIN.

Young Cormorants. The difference is most marked in fiction. We regularly publish in this country between four and five thousand novels a year, including reprints (in 1940 the figure was 3791, as against 4222 in 1939). This is three or four times as many as in the United States, with its much larger public. Are we more "escapist" than the realistic Americans? I doubt it; the explanation is probably to be found in the short story, which has an immense vogue and is a highly profitable form of literature to its practitioners. What happens, one often wonders, to the huge output of English novels? The great majority are born to blush unseen, and provide little except the blush either for author or publisher; but nothing seems to daunt them, and nothing satiates the appetite of novel-eaters. They acquire the vicious taste young. Babes and sucklings are literary cormorants nowadays. Both England and America publish nearly a thousand "juveniles" every year. Many of these books are works of instruction rather than imagination, which is very unfair to parents who were not brought up amid such a wealth of knowledge. The cross-examination on electricity, and other morbid subjects, to which modern parents are exposed is undoubtedly one of the chief causes of the declining birth-rate.



It's a civilians' war!

DRAWN BY VICKY.

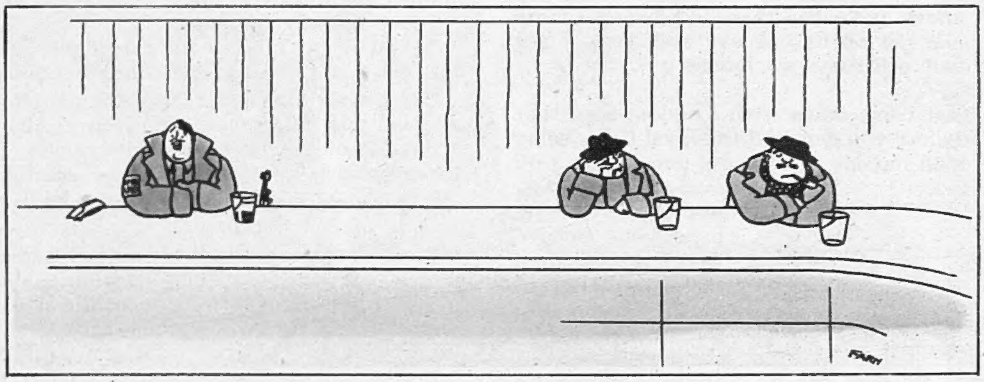
Poetry Pays. Juvenile and educational books are the nearest competitors, though many laps behind, with fiction. Next in order of popularity come Politics and Questions of the Day, Religion and Theology (always a very good seller in both countries), Biography and Memoirs, and History. The passion for biography is even more voracious in America than here, but stronger still in the United States is the appetite for history; it produces nearly four times as many historical books as England seems to need. Perhaps the most conspicuous difference between the two markets is that America (738) produces five times as many books of poetry and drama as England (143). Young poets in U.S.A. must have a large circle of relatives and friends! Those who persist in thinking of America as an "uncultured" country should ponder on these figures. That youth should write poetry is merely the ordinary course of nature, and it is perhaps only a particular phase of the epidemic that most of the poetry is unintelligible. But that numerous other persons should not only read, but even *buy* tortured cryptograms—this displays a respect for Culture (with an enormous capital C) which moves me to wonder and humility.

Skin and Bone. Too many books? Well, whether there are or not, there seem to be too many words—or so it is felt by some of our language reformers. It is stated on the highest authority that there are over 400,000 words in the English language, and new ones are constantly being added. Shakespeare is said to have used about 20,000 of them, which leaves an ample working margin for ordinary people. The Orthological Institute thinks it larger than is really necessary, and, pursuing a wartime policy of drastic economy, has reduced Basic English to 850 words. It has taken ten years to eviscerate the New Testament, and now we are offered a Basic Bible. Here is the Basic version of the lilies of the field: "Give thought to the flowers: they do no work, they make no thread." This seems to me very wasteful. Why not: "Consider flowers: they neither work nor spin"? Seven words instead of thirteen! If it comes to that, why not reduce the Bible, or the whole of literature, to shorthand? This would apparently be the ideal of Mr. Bernard Shaw. He complains not so much of unnecessary words—no, I don't think he has ever been much worried about *them*—as of unnecessary letters; and he has proved that *The Times* would save itself acres of space and many thousands of pounds by adopting Shavian shorthand. I dare say it is all very scientific, but these attempts at rationalising that highly irrational thing, language, alarm and depress me. If the day ever comes when I have to write Basic Motley Notes, I shall definitely hand in my dinner-pail. What was good enough for Shakespeare is good enough for me—though never, of course, for Mr. Shaw.

A Woman with a Grievance. There are millions of my fellow-citizens before whom I feel very humble; but there are some who move me to sentiments which I could never get past the sub-editor if I attempted to express them here. I have just had an interview which has made me painfully aware of stronger homicidal tendencies than I had ever suspected in myself. An indignant female, after making a scene with several other persons, succeeded in forcing herself upon me, hot with grievance. It seemed that her daughter's gas-mask had developed a defect (she appeared to regard even that as a national outrage), and a new one was required immediately. I pointed out, as soothingly as I could, that the victim of this conspiracy

on the part of the Government had only to present herself at the nearest A.R.P. Store and she could obtain a beautiful new respirator on payment of half a crown. But that was monstrous! Was Darling Daughter really expected, after she got home from her day's work, to go all the way up to Such-and-Such Road and then actually to *pay* for her own self-protection? Yes, I said, that was exactly what she was expected to do, and what else did the lady suggest? Well, what were the Wardens for? Couldn't *they* go a mere mile or two and get her beloved daughter a gas-mask? What was the use of them if they couldn't do a little thing like that? It was a scandal! She had never met such an unhelpful lot of slackers in her life! At that point I showed her out, before I forgot my Old World Courtesy. She is now definitely a woman with a grievance against her country.

Cinderella. She is not typical, but there are too many like her. Despite the concerted effort which is being made all round them, there are still these sluggards who expect everything to be done for them by the Government, by the Wardens and even by their neighbours. Whatever the dirty work, somebody else will "see to it"—usually the police or the A.R.P. Poor old A.R.P.! I am glad to see that it is making itself heard and demanding a little more consideration than it has yet received in some of its difficulties. It is notorious that the service is in many places grossly undermanned, or manned by the wrong people, and there is far more material available than has yet been tapped. The sixties and seventies, in too many districts, are doing a job which ought to be done by the fifties—in short, by men who are (as I, for one, like to think) in the Prime of Life. In all the passion for man-power, which makes such fascinating graphs and tables and blue-prints for departmental pundits, no thought has been given to maintaining the numbers and quality of this essential, though unromantic, service, and it is left to recruit itself in any way it can—or can't. The fact is that, improvised experimentally and against many discouragements, it has never had the reorganisation which should have come with experience, and it is now due for thorough overhaul.



"Do you see what I see?"

DRAWN BY FARM.

Love Among the Ashes. Love laughs at locks and merely smiles, not to say giggles, at bombs. Awkward if you arrive at the altar, all garlanded for the sacrifice, only to find that the altar is no longer there and the church is but a smouldering smear. A nervous bridegroom might make this a pretext for prolonging his bachelorhood, but if the Best Man knew his job, this pusillanimous type of groom would find himself held in a vice-like grip until the bride's reaction was known. The bride, it is safe to prophesy, would be found in any part of the edifice which remained intact, were it only the porch, and there the ceremony would be performed, even if the clergy had to wear vestments of asbestos. Such were the nuptials of a happy couple the other day, and may good luck be made up to them after an initial ordeal by fire. Another couple arrived at a Register Office to find it a heap of ashes. What of that? The imperturbable Registrar was waiting on the pavement and the knot was as firmly tied as if the whole world were at peace. Lest any legal technicality should arise, the parties stepped "into the building"—*i.e.*, among the ruins—to pronounce the contracting words. May the spouses live to tell their (probably incredulous) grandchildren of the romantic circumstances of their marriage!

"Do you mind if 'e learns a few words, mates?"

DRAWN BY H. H. HARRIS.

Duty is Duty. These are entirely laudable examples of the spirit of "carry on," but carrying on can be carried too far. For example, ought Business as Usual to be the watch-word of the police during a *Blitz*? Suppose you took cover in a shelter which seemed more attractive than most shelters; and suppose it turned out to be a matey little club where a bright show was going on and where there seemed to be a certain amount of refreshment in the offing; and suppose, at about 11.30 p.m., the "noises off" being somewhat persistent, you felt that some circumambient refreshment would have a steadying effect; in those circumstances, would you consider it quite playing the game if the police came barging in and you found yourself in the humiliating position of a "consumer"? That is what happened the other day to a number of consumers at a quiet little club of *Blitz*-dodgers. Hard, very hard; but it is no use saying to a constable, with a notebook in his hand, "I say, old boy, do you know there's a war on?" You'll only get your fine doubled for Insulting Behaviour or Obstructing in the Execution.

"Oh, our feelings we with difficulty smother
When constabulary duty's to be done";

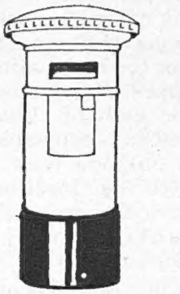
but constabulary duty is constabulary duty, *Blitz* or no *Blitz*.

Much Learning. Nor is the duty of keeping the King's Peace to be overborne by argument or sophistry. Socrates argued all his life—and look where it landed him. He argued right up to the last moment, but the police, in that obstinate way of theirs, just wouldn't listen to him. He set an unfortunate example, and the same fate (except that it took the form of £1 or a week, instead of hemlock) happened recently to one of his modern followers. His explanation of a spirited rough-house was one not usually heard by Metropolitan Police Magistrates: "I met an old friend, and together we discussed philosophy in a nearby inn. We talked of Homer, Socrates and Euripides, ending up with Pythagoras, and I am afraid we got into our cups." Sad, crude and disillusioning! Accepting, for the moment, Homer and Euripides as philosophers (though the point is debatable), is it not disappointing to find that so much ancient wisdom leads only to a personal attack on the opposing philosopher and then to the vulgar crime of resisting the police? If Socrates had met Pythagoras would the same thing have happened? These are depressing speculations—let us not pursue them.

Walk Delicately. What progress are you making in the gentle art of Doing Without? It is a fascinating technique, and it is remarkable what skill can be acquired with practice. It brings the war home to you when a Princess has to do without icing on her birthday cake. The other day I attended a wedding where the cake, rich in dyspeptic ingredients and thick with icing, caused pained surprise among the guests (who, however, partook liberally of it), until it was explained that the materials had been carefully amassed before the war. Now, there's a foreseeing young woman for you! Well, we can do without icing sugar and even sugar-plums, but we must be careful about our shoes. There are going to be only eighty million pairs of them this year. It seems a lot, but it's twenty-four million pairs less than average—and leather will go on wearing out, war or no war. It is a great lack in civilisation that, while you can darn socks, you can't darn shoes. A fortune awaits the inventor of the darnable shoe. Meanwhile, we are at the mercy of the cobbler. Walk, therefore, like Agag, and let the venerable appearance of your footwear be a cause of pride rather than apology.

Please forward

By JOYCE DENNYS.



MY DEAR ROBERT—It really is extraordinary how one can become accustomed to anything in time. I shall always remember the first time the siren went off, and how we all jumped out of bed and went down to the scullery, and my knees shook. Now, when it wails on and off all night, we just turn over in bed and grunt. Charles says I am sometimes inclined to use a word which no lady should know, and when there is a bigger thump than usual, he opens one eye and says, "Big Stuff," but otherwise we ignore it.

Faith's sister, who has just come down from London, says that it is only a matter of time before you get used to Naval Guns being pushed up and down the road outside your house and popping off every few minutes, but I can't bring myself to believe that, and I shall go on believing Faith's sister and the other people in the big towns to be heroes and heroines who steel themselves to endure.

"Mr. Poppleford would have to do my morning's work."

When I told her so, she said the praise was gratifying, but undeserved.

Colonel Simpkins says he likes the night Alerts, because they stop him lying awake worrying about his seedlings, but the poor A.R.P. people are beginning to be very heavy-eyed. To-day, when I took our shears down to be sharpened, I found Mr. Poppleford asleep in his shop with his feet on the counter. I put down the shears very quietly and tip-toed out, and I hope he got a good rest, because he deserves it.

"'Come on!' shouted the Lodger."

I was saying to Charles at lunch to-day that I thought it would be a good plan if we people who don't have to go out at night were to take over the morning work of those who do; and that I could sit behind Mr. Poppleford's counter and take in people's shears and billhooks, and put them away and forget about them as well as anybody. But Charles said he didn't think it was a very good plan, because then Mr. Poppleford would have to come up here and do my morning's work, and that once people started taking on each other's jobs it led to Confusion. He also said he hoped that now people realised what getting out of bed in the middle of the night was like, they'd think twice before sending for him; but I think that is just wishful thinking on Charles's part, don't you?

The other night I was just dropping off to sleep again after an Alert, when I thought I heard a sort of popping noise.

"Do you hear a funny noise?" I said to Charles.

"Yes," said Charles.

"What is it?"

"Oh, somebody firing something at somebody," said Charles, and fell asleep again.

I got up and looked out of the window, and saw what looked like every house in the place ablaze. The next minute there was a deafening crash on the landing, which I thought must surely be an incendiary bomb until I remembered that the pre-arranged signal of danger with our Lodger in the attics was to be a saucepan thrown down the well of the stairs. A second later she appeared in the doorway, a pocket Amazon, holding aloft the dustbin-lid which she takes up to bed with her every night.

"Come on!" shouted the Lodger. "Now's our chance!"

"What a racket you two are making!" said Charles peevishly.

"But Charles! The place is on fire!"

"Do you mean this house is on fire?" said Charles, showing interest for the first time.

"Not actually this house."

"Well, I can't leave the telephone, in case I'm wanted at the hospital," said Charles, and composed himself to slumber once more.

The Lodger and I went into the garden, and the sight which met our eyes was better than any firework display, but it was all at the other end of the town, and everywhere the lights were going out one by one as though snuffed by giant fingers.

"Everybody's putting them out except us," wailed the Lodger, beating on her dustbin-lid in a distraught manner.

Then we saw the incendiary bomb blazing merrily in the Simpkins's garden. We knew Colonel Simpkins would be out with the A.R.P., and Mrs. Simpkins was alone in the house. I rushed back to the porch for a sand-bag, found it was too heavy to lift, made a supreme effort, struggled with it for a few yards, and fell down.

In the end we had to put it on the dustbin-lid and carry it between us.

"I hope it isn't one of those explosive ones," I said nervously, as we reeled, panting, up the garden path, and the Lodger gave a contemptuous snort. The next minute a little figure staggered out from behind some bushes. It was Mrs. Simpkins, wearing corduroy trousers, which she had treasured for goodness knows how many months against such an emergency, over her nightgown.

"It's my bomb!" cried Mrs. Simpkins, like a lion defending its cubs.

"We've come to put it out for you," said the Lodger, between clenched teeth.

"I don't want you to put it out for me. I want to put it out for myself."

"The sand-bag is too heavy for you."

"It isn't. It isn't. I've been practising."

"Ours has got more sand in it."

"It's my bomb!"

We glared at each other, our faces distorted with passion in the lurid light.

Suddenly the bomb went out. It must have been burning for some time, and perhaps it wasn't a very good one, anyway.

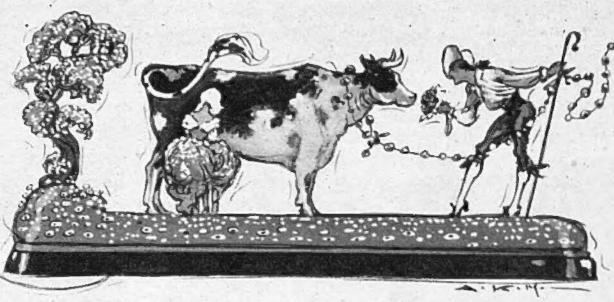
Always your affectionate Childhood's Friend,

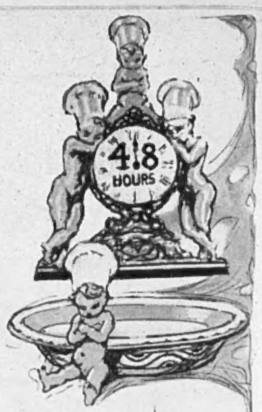
HENRIETTA.

"'It's my bomb!'"

"IT'S MY WIFE, MISS SMITH! SHE'S NOT VERY BROADMINDED; PERHAPS YOU'D BETTER BE SEEN IN YOUR GAS-MASK!"

DRAWN BY FRANK REYNOLDS.

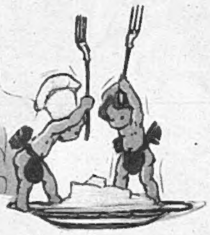


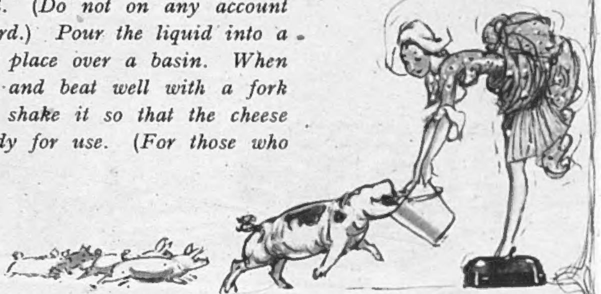


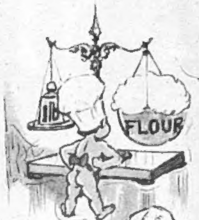
PÂTE FEUILLETÉE AU FROMAGE.

THE start of this dish takes place some 48 hours before the actual day on which it is served, as the cheese has to be made; rather a slow process, but really very easy as it almost makes itself.

THE CHEESE.—Pour out three pints of milk into a flat bowl and leave for 24 hours in a cool place. Skim off the cream and stand the milk on or near the stove, kitchen range, or other warm place for approximately 24 hours, or until the milk is thoroughly curdled. Turn out into a saucepan and stir vigorously over a slow fire until just on the boil. (Do not on any account allow it to boil, as the cheese then becomes too hard.) Pour the liquid into a piece of butter muslin and hang it in some cool place over a basin. When the whey has drained away, turn out the cheese and beat well with a fork into a smooth paste, then replace in the muslin, shake it so that the cheese becomes whole again, and tip out on a plate ready for use. (For those who keep pigs it is interesting to note that the whey, mixed with their food, is much appreciated and very nourishing!)



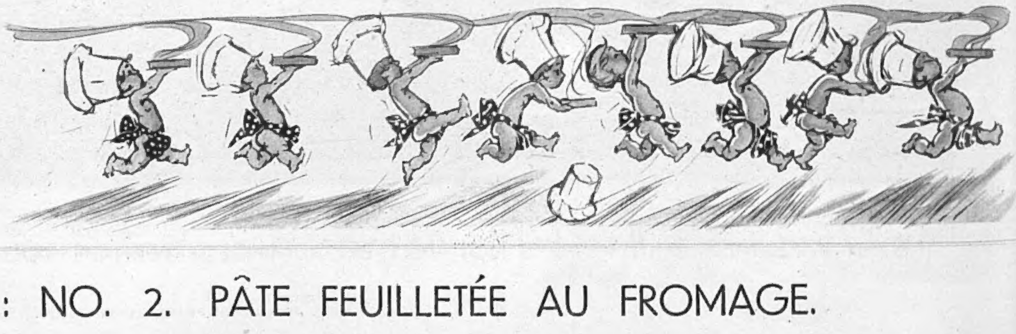




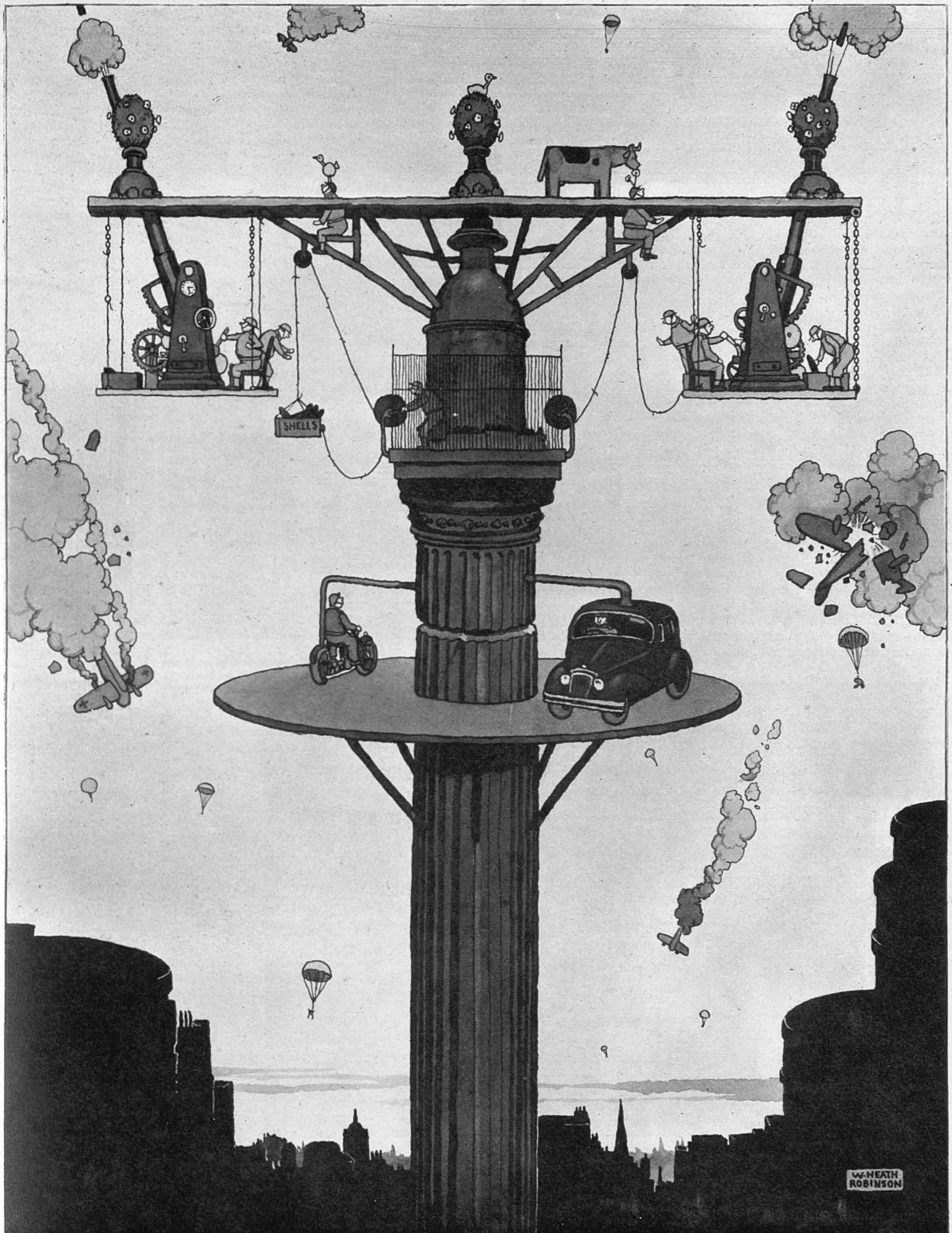
THE PASTRY.—Your cheese is now ready and waiting, and the next step is to prepare some puff pastry—this can, of course, be made in the ordinary way with flour and margarine, but I should suggest the following recipe as more economical and much quicker: Weigh out 1 lb. of flour into a mixing-bowl, scoop out a hollow in the centre and pour in three tablespoonfuls of olive oil, a teaspoonful of salt, and a cup of hot water. Stir rapidly with a wooden spoon till all the ingredients are thoroughly mixed, then knead with the hands until the paste can be easily detached from the fingers. Replace in the bowl and leave it for ten minutes in a warm place covered with a hot moist cloth. Roll it out on a board, cover with a dry cloth and leave for a further fifteen minutes, then roll it once more, this time as thin as possible, and cut into eight squares of equal dimensions.

THE DISH.—Place four layers of the paste, one on top of the other, in a greased baking-tin, painting each layer with melted margarine. Next mix the cheese with one egg, a pinch of salt, and a tablespoonful of cream, and spread this mixture over the whole surface. Cover with four more layers of pastry, again painting each one, and finally brushing the whole with margarine. Leave in a moderate oven for half an hour. Cut into large squares and serve very hot.

ILLUSTRATED BY A. K. MACDONALD.



UNRATIONED RELISH: NO. 2. PÂTE FEUILLETÉE AU FROMAGE.



HOW TO DEFEND LONDON.

This brilliant W. Heath Robinson suggestion for the defence of London shows how a cleverly camouflaged anti-aircraft gun emplacement might well be arranged on the top of the Monument, and could deal most effectively with the pest of the night-raider.

DRAWN BY W. HEATH ROBINSON.

CINEMA CAMEOS.

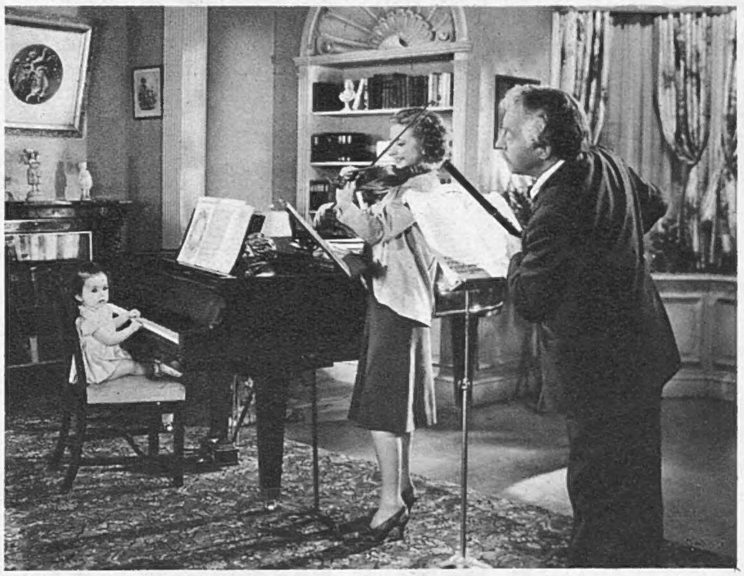
By C. A. LEJEUNE.

"THE MARX BROTHERS GO WEST" (Empire) isn't quite the happiest of the boys' screen contraptions. It takes a good while to get into its stride. Neither the Brothers nor the screen-writers seem entirely at their ease in the opening reels, which deal with the misadventures of three tenderfeet amongst the crooks and land-grabbers of a Western frontier town. There is fun, but not all the fun there might be. One remembers, with some nostalgia, the non-stop comic business of "The Coconuts," "Animal Crackers" and "Horse Feathers." But towards the end of the film the boys get on to a runaway train, and from then onwards it's Full Marx and no mistake.

This climax, like the glorious tank chase in "Comrade X," is in the very best slapstick tradition. Groucho, Harpo and Chico career wildly all over the train as it thunders along the track, unload the fuel to stop the engine, and then rip the coaches to pieces for firewood to get it going again. It is the maddest and most satisfying nonsense, with the engine carrying everything before it, even a complete farmhouse, and the boys timing their knockabout with the unity and precision of acrobats. Incidentally, the dumb Harpo speaks in this sequence—though you won't hear it in the picture. It was necessary, while the three brothers were running along the roof of the train, for them to turn their heads simultaneously for the camera to shoot a backward glance. Harpo, who was the hindmost, had to control the timing. So, at the crucial moment, he said "Turn!"—and they all turned. But the word, following the recognised formula for a Harpo performance, has been left in the cutting-room.

These excisions, of course, can easily be made in films, but when Harpo forgets himself and speaks in the theatre, the slip can't be repaired so easily. The story goes that when the brothers were touring in the stage show of "Go West," Harpo decided one evening to try out a new harp number. He lost the tune, fumbled for a chord or two, and was heard to mutter, "I'll get the damned thing yet," forgetting the microphone at his elbow. "Ah, Harpo talks!" came a shout from the gallery, and the unintentional gag got a laugh that was one of the show's big highspots. . . . Harpo, by the way, has his harp solo (though not his line) in the current film version, and Chico finds time for his usual engaging performance on the piano keys.

It is a longish way from the Marx Brothers to the Lemp Sisters, whom you will find next door at Warner's Theatre, in "FOUR MOTHERS." The Lemp Girls (Rosemary, Lola and Priscilla Lane, and Gale Page) will be remembered as the musical young things who found love in "Four Daughters," and experienced the emotional and clinical consequences in "Four Wives." In "Four Mothers" they have a bouncing babe apiece, but even in the midst of their maternal responsibilities they still find time for music.



Reviewed in this article, "Four Mothers" (Warner Theatre) adds a new chapter to the saga of the Lemp family, bringing the Lane-Page quartet back with it. Adam Lemp (CLAUDE RAINS) *tells his daughter, Ann Dietz* (PRISCILLA LANE), *that her child and his granddaughter* (BEVERLEY QUINTANELLA), *strumming at the piano, is learning to play Beethoven. Ludwig's bust on the lid lends colour to this statement.*

Ben Crowley (FRANK McHUGH) *hears his estate, Ocean Zephyrs, is destroyed by a hurricane; the townspeople to whom he has sold shares in it turn on him, refusing suburban property he offers them to restore his credit. Aunt Etta* (MAY ROBSON), *Emma Talbot* (GALE PAGE), *Ann Dietz; Kay Forrest* (ROSEMARY LANE) *and his wife Thea* (LOLA LANE) *rally round to help to put him on his feet again.*

Music, indeed, plays a big part in the picture. Father Lemp (Claude Rains) loses his job as a teacher at the local Music Foundation when the building scheme promoted by one Lemp husband (Frank McHugh) turns out disastrously. Since the neighbours, on father Lemp's recommendation, have invested their savings in the scheme, it's up to all good Lemps (and all Lemps are good Lemps) to pay back the money. This comes hard on the Lemp husband (Jeffrey Lynn) who is about to write the great American symphony, and the other Lemp husband (Eddie Albert), who is hunting down an epidemic germ. However, all rally round, girls, boys and babies, in the happy Lemp way, and in the end Father Lemp saves the day by getting a well-paid job as conductor of a symphony orchestra.

"Four Mothers" is a pretty thing, which kind hearts will love. There are babies, flowers, chamber music, family chatter, and all the small change of a happy world that seems as remote as lost Babylon. Newcomers to the series will have to sort things out for themselves, discovering, for instance, which young husband is the father of which baby. The Lemp family is so big by now—and there was that unfortunate affair, two films back, of the fair Lemp girl's first marriage and widowhood — that there is apt to be a bit of confusion. But if you are the kind of happy-go-lucky person who likes to tumble into a new household, you will find the film intriguing. I like the Lemps myself, and am prepared to go in and help them out with the piano any time the girls care to give me a ring.

"THE SAINT'S VACATION," at the New Gallery, is a series picture, too, and leaves a good deal to the foreknowledge of the audience. The film begins with a formalised shot of a matchstick Saint advancing jerkily towards the camera along a dark corridor. It continues with a great to-do at the docks when Simon Templar (Hugh Sinclair) is known to be starting on a Continental holiday. The event is important enough to be covered by Fleet Street, of whom only one representative, a girl named Mary (Sally Gray) is bright enough to trail the real story. Crossing to France and Switzerland, under, apparently, her own steam, she gets on to the track of the Saint, who is himself on the track of a secret sound-detector wanted by a spy named Rudolph (Cecil Parker). The film ends advantageously to the British Government, which is nice, but I can't help feeling that the resulting censorship is a bit tough on Mary. All that trouble, I mean to say, and not a stick to show for it, not even a husband or the hint of a burgeoning love-affair.

"LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR" (Carlton), too, falls more or less into the series pattern. It follows up the traditional radio feud, obviously cosy to American listeners, between broadcasters Jack Benny and Fred Allen. For most of the film the two comedians hurl insults at one another, and Miss Mary Martin, supposedly the employee of one and the niece of the other, tries to patch up the quarrel. The boys have done it all on the screen before, but it still doesn't seem a matter of grave concern to British audiences. Most people will concentrate on Miss Martin's eye-filling and ear-filling charm, and on the antics of Rochester, the coloured comedian. Miss Martin, by the way, revives that old Cole Porter classic, "My Heart Belongs to Daddy," which first brought her a film contract and Broadway fame.

Production by a demolition squad! "Josephine Baker" makes an appearance amid the débris after a bombing raid.

Gaily hatted and smoking! A wax mannequin which demolition workers have dolled up in spirited fashion.

"Mistinguett" and her famous legs in the débris of a London street: a group of wax models dressed up and posed with characteristic Cockney wit by workmen of a demolition squad.

"LET US BE GAY!" LONDON HUMOUR AMID THE RUINS.

A. P. Herbert's injunction "Let us be gay" is hardly needed by the London workman, for the characteristic Cockney wit and love of fun find natural expression even when at work clearing up the ruined streets of our great city. These cleverly arranged and amusingly labelled figures are damaged wax mannequins which demolition workers came across after a raid.

BILLINGSGATE, LEADENHALL AND SMITHFIELD MARKETS.

By THEODORA BENSON and BETTY ASKWITH.

Authors of " Foreigners; or the World in a Nutshell."

ILLUSTRATED BY TOPOLSKI.

NATURALLY we heard no bad language. It was one long orgy of sweetness and light. With the news scarcely uplifting and the weather ruined (probably by enemy propaganda), everybody was in radiant tempers. Wherever we strayed we were greeted by cries of "Hullo, girls," and "How are you, dears?" One white-aproned youth called out eagerly: "Are you happy in your work?", and a little man driving enormous horses in an enormous cart with an enormous load of boxes of smoked fish pulled up to ask us where we were going and whether we wanted a lift. They seem to be everybody's chum at Billingsgate.

A Billingsgate Fish-market Porter.

If one famous feature was missing, the other was present in full force. We saw plenty of the well-known hats. We ascertained that they are made of leather and cost about £2 each. We toyed with the idea of buying one for Topolski (there was an engaging little shop which sold hats and clogs and wire fish-carriers and smoked haddocks and paper bags for your winkles), but dismissed it on the grounds of wartime extravagance.

The gentleman who told us about the hats was a charming fish wholesaler and very knowledgeable. He talked, supported by a couple of delivery men with barrows, of the state of the trade. "The fishmongers," he said, "are getting *that* cagey about buying on account of the prices being so wicked. It stands to reason the retailers don't want to buy if they don't see the way to get their money back. Well, it's like this, see: a dealer in wet fish has a chance of his money back, though you know as well as I do, dear, that it isn't natural to give two-and-six a pound for cod. But when it comes to a fried shop, the dealer ain't properly got no chance, because customers don't feel it right-like to pay more than the same old fourpence for their bit of fried. Well, when he gets a pound of skate he has to divide it into six portions, and he hardly can do that, after all. And then he has his overheads, his gas and his rent and what-not, and, anyway, lots of them have been bombed right out. It goes to show, don't it?"

Under the sign of a fish.

There is a pleasant atmosphere down there by the river; and this means more than the clean, fishy smell. There's a wide view of the water, with tall cranes and barges and a broken building that has already an historical look because that wasn't last week's bomb. Big, handsome horses and smart ponies wait placidly; seaweed lies in the gutter; Fish Street and Pudding Lane, where the Great Fire started, as every school-child knows, and Love Lane, which has lately been renamed Lovat Lane—a come-down, surely—climb steep and narrow to where the Monument "lifts its tall finger to the Heavens and lies." We thought the Coal Exchange, with its tower and its dashing gargoyles, was a church. When we got inside, it still looked like one; a circular hall with tiers of ornamental galleries with doors opening into offices, and formal painted decorations. Great coal sales are held three times a week of an afternoon, "though it isn't what it was, dear, any more nor the fish market," and you mayn't smoke till after 4 o'clock. When we told the policeman outside how nice it was, he said quite eagerly:

"Well, I must really take a look some time. I've been down here fifteen years, but I've never happened to step inside."

Then we looked into a real church, St. Mary-at-Hill, and after we had admired its fine proportions and rich carving, its clerk's desk (an unusual survival, this), and the painted garlands of its dome and ceiling, we read a few epitaphs, and rejoiced again at the felicitous phrasing of the eighteenth century. "He passed this life with integrity and honour, and changed it for eternity October 12th 1700."

A Billingsgate type.

Leadenhall Market is a great contrast to Billingsgate. The latter is out of doors, with the sight of cranes and the smell of seaweed and low tide; the former is under an arcade, a row of little shops, cosy, warm, protected and lit throughout the year by artificial light. It reminded us vaguely of something, with its mid-Victorian, Dickensian atmosphere, but it was not until we saw the strings of sausages hanging up that we knew, and then it came to us in a run. Of course, it was the street in the Harlequinade. The shops were well stocked, though prices, we were pleased to note, did not seem any cheaper than in the West End. Nevertheless, as we really wanted a chicken we went prospecting from shop to shop. In one of them we observed a price-card which seemed moderate, so, closing in, we asked if they had any Irish fowls.

"No chickens at all," replied the vendor, with equanimity. "Oh, *that*," as we indicated the card, "that's just so you can see the prices."

"Yes," we answered doubtfully. "We do see the prices. But if you've got no chickens, we're no better off, are we?"

"Not a *bit*," he replied with great heartiness. The whole episode pleased us, so that we bought a duck (2s. 1d. per lb., in case it interests you: total, 5s. 4d.), and as it was a good one we were content, even though we then saw plenty of fowls in the next-door shop.

Our next port of call was Smithfield, but when we got there we were forcibly struck by Flecker's lines:

> And the great markets of the world are shut
> All that calm Sunday which goes on and on.

The only sign of trading was a small boy on a carrier-tricycle, in front of which was balanced a dead pig elegantly wrapped in a sort of bridal veil of white muslin. The boy was steering with one hand and holding on to the pig's tail with the other. We timidly asked a large policeman if perhaps we were a bit late for the market.

"Very late," he replied. "It hasn't been open since the war."

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO—

LIEUT.-COM. METAXA—*for having his pocket Navy commissioned by the Admiralty to teach the tars.*

MISS ETHEL GERARD—*for taking the Board of Agriculture literally with a very model way of digging for victory.*

THE LANCING WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICE—*for being Mother Hubbards with well-stocked cupboards.*

The sad story of Mother Hubbard's empty cupboard has been reversed by the LANCING WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICE, who fully realise the importance of meat to our friends. They have started a dogs'-meat shop at Worthing, which soon fills up with relieved customers, who foresaw "rationally" empty tummies for their pets.

IN the art of modern warfare scale models are vital. Instant recognition of ships being an essential part in training men of the Navy and Fleet Air Arm, the exquisitely detailed miniature Fleet made by LIEUT.-COM. METAXA was requisitioned by the Admiralty for instructional purposes. His Fleet numbers nearly 250 model craft of all kinds, including one of "King George V." As new ships are listed for building, this enthusiastic officer starts work on his model.

MISS ETHEL GERARD, Curator of Worthing Museum, has made an accurate scale-model of a perfect allotment as laid down by the Ministry of Agriculture. She has used pine, needles, packing paper, ivy leaves, box shoots, and wire, which she has "sown" in earth in a wooden frame. Details are given as to how and when seeds should be sown, how far apart, and how and when to thin out.

MR. MAURICE SUMMERS, one of our chief test pilots, over in America on his job, found the quickest way to return was to fly one of the latest machines over here. He beat the record by his 7½ hours' flight.

MR. MAURICE SUMMERS—*for a record crossing of the Atlantic—seven and a-half hours in warplane and wartime.*

CADET TONY SUTTON, *of the R.A.C.—for beating the Food Controller at his own game.*

LORD WOOLTON can't get a rabbit out of a hat, any more than some of us can find one in a shop, but CADET TONY SUTTON, of the R.A.C., a well-known conjurer, produces a "duck" out of his tin-hat with the greatest of ease.

ONE of five new recipients of the D.F.C. is ACTING SQUADRON LEADER BARRIE HEATH, No. 611 Squadron, A.A.F., whose father, Mr. G. F. Heath, gave a cheque to buy a "Spitfire" to be named after a son who died in the last war after shooting down a German ace. Mr. Heath asked if his son Barrie could fly the machine, and it was in this 'plane that he won his decoration.

ACTING SQUADRON LEADER BARRIE HEATH *(seen with his wife)—for a D.F.C. win in his own father's "Spitfire."*

ARMY, R.A.F. AND W.A.A.F. ROYAL ACADEMY PORTRAITS.

"FLIGHT OFFICER F. HANBURY, W.A.A.F."; *by* T. C. DUGDALE, A.R.A.

"AIR COMMANDANT J. TREFUSIS FORBES, C.B.E., W.A.A.F."; *by* T. C. DUGDALE, A.R.A.

"AIR MARSHAL SIR A. S. BARRATT, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.C., C.-IN-C. ARMY CO-OPERATION"; *by* T. C. DUGDALE, A.R.A.

"GENERAL SIR A. F. BROOKE, K.C.B., D.S.O."; *by* R. G. EVES, R.A.

On this page we reproduce a quartet of important uniform portraits from the Royal Academy. Mr. Dugdale painted his portrait of Air Marshal Sir A. S. Barratt for the nation's war records. General Sir A. F. Brooke was appointed Commander-in-Chief Home Forces last year.

"CHILDREN FROM THE TOWN"; *by* B. FLEETWOOD-WALKER.

ROYAL ACADEMY ACTUALITY AND FANTASY.

THE second wartime Royal Academy, which opened to the public on Monday last, May 5, contains many wartime subjects, two of which are illustrated on this page. The third picture chosen for reproduction is James W. Tucker's gay and humorous fantasy, "The Champion."

"DEEP SHELTER 1940"; *by* H. RAEBURN DOBSON.

"THE CHAMPION"; *by* JAMES W. TUCKER.

PHOTOGRAPH BY FOX.

MINESWEEPER—ATTACK.

The MINESWEEPERS' *work of keeping the harbour channels and approaches free from enemy mines is vital to the success of the Battle of the Atlantic, but to carry out their work they must keep a constant look-out for enemy aircraft. We have been thrilled by the stories of the exploits of minesweepers such as the "Lorna Doone," which shot down one, possibly two, Dorniers when attacked by three. This photograph shows the gun-crew of a minesweeper at action stations on the multiple guns with which their craft is armed.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY FOX.

MINESWEEPER—DEFENCE.

This photograph shows a sailor up aloft on board a MINESWEEPER *of the Royal Navy, and illustrates the balloon barrage which is carried on these ships as a further protection from attacks of enemy dive-bombers. The minesweepers are well armed and have had very considerable success in shooting down raiders. Not long ago the minesweeper "Locust" shot down a bomber which was engaged in an unsuccessful attack on a convoy in the Thames Estuary, and hit two more raiders.*

GALLANTRY SCULPTURED IN WAX AT
AND R.A.F

Mr. Bernard Tussaud, head of the famous wax show, helps to put the head in position.

Six photographs show the model of LCE. - CORPORAL HARRY NICHOLLS, *Grenadier Guards, awarded one of the two first V.C.s of the war for conspicuous gallantry at Dunkirk.*

The waxen head of Lce.-Corporal Nicholls faces that of a superior officer, C.-in-C. GENERAL SIR G. DILL, V.C.

CAPTAIN B. A. W. WARBURTON-LEE, R.N., *of the "Hardy," won the first V.C. of the war, posthumously awarded, for leading the 2nd Destroyer Flotilla into Narvik Fjord, and sinking a number of enemy ships in superior force.*

SERGEANT GRAY, R.A.F., *with Pilot Officer Garland (right), won the first R.A.F. V.C. of the war for bombing a bridge over the Albert Canal during the German invasion of Belgium.*

V.C.s are being made on the field of battle, in the air, at sea, and also in wax. Mr. Bernard Tussaud, carrying on the work of his ancestor, has modell the earliest V.C.s of this war which are now on view at that famous show. Mr. Tussaud is most meticulous in his work, always trying if he possi can to have sittings from the living model, when he sculpts the hands as well as the face. In the case of posthumous V.C.s he works from as ma

ME. TUSSAUD'S—THE FIRST NAVY, ARMY
C.s OF THE WAR.

The battle-dress is put on, neat and trim, no detail being overlooked.

The model of the Lce.-Corporal is ready to be put in its place of honour in the show.

Here is the finished portrait of Lce.-Corporal Nicholls as you can see it at Madame Tussaud's.

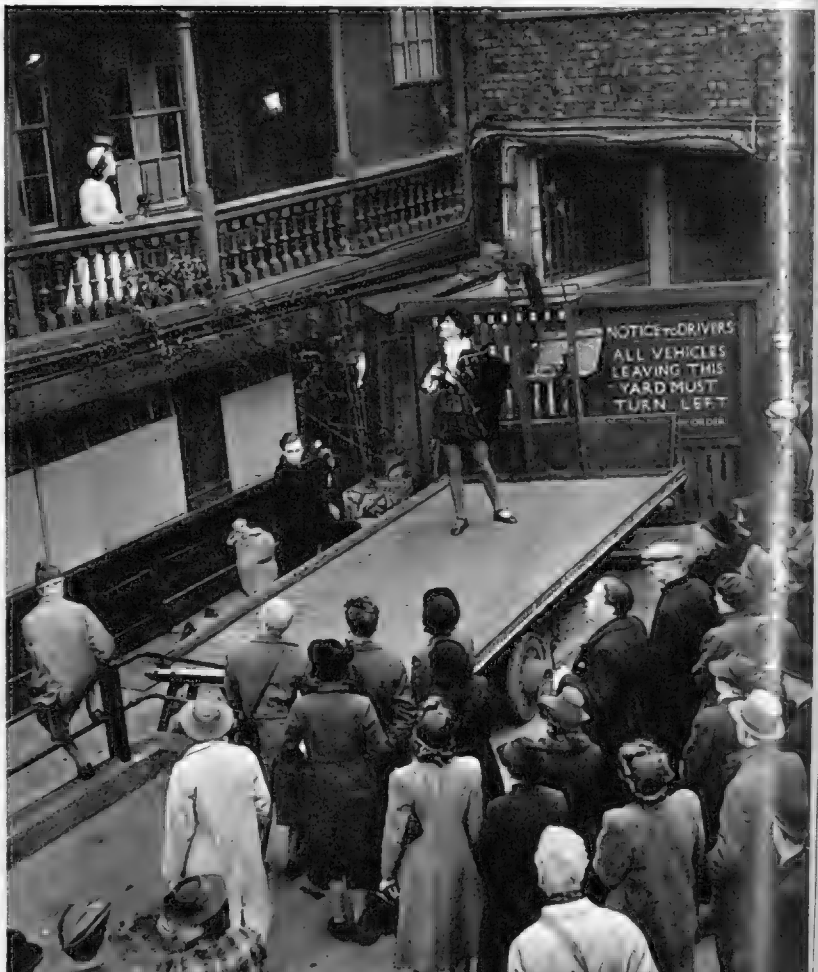
PILOT OFFICER GARLAND, V.C., who with Sergeant Gray (left) showed great gallantry during the invasion of Belgium, and neither of whom returned from the action.

The commissionaire of Tussaud's salutes the models of three V.C.s, numbered and in position on their stands, amazingly lifelike and ready for the public to see what their heroes look like.

hotographs as he can get. Hair, eyes and teeth have the greatest attention—especially the eyes—to avoid an unnatural expression. Wartime is difficult or glass eyes, which in peacetime come from all over Europe; Bernard Tussaud manages to make them look really human. Hair is difficult, too, to natch, and extraordinarily expensive. Blonde hair costs 27s. an ounce, compared with black at only 9s. an ounce.

The marriage of singing screen-star DEANNA DURBIN to film director VAUGHN PAUL took place in Hollywood, and was attended by 900 guests. The ceremony was at midnight.

Two contingents of MECHANISED TRANSPORT CORPS DRIVERS which left England last autumn for service in Kenya are now attached to the H.Q. Army of the Middle East, Cairo. The girls look smart in their practical uniforms.



For twenty-one years the BOROUGH AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY have celebrated Shakespeare's birthday by a performance in the Old George Inn. This year they gave "Romeo and Juliet." Romeo spoke from a railway truck.

MR. ALLEN LANE, founder of Penguin Books, son of Mr. A. W. Lane, is engaged to MISS LETTICE ORR, eldest daughter of Sir Charles Orr.

LIEUT. G. W. ("SANDY") STAVERT, K.O.S.B., son of Mr. G. V. Stavert, married MISS DIANA DE HORSEY, daughter of the late Admiral de Horsey.

WEDDING AND ENGAGEMENT NEWS; OVERSEAS

LIEUT. ANTHONY JOHN STANHOPE DUCKWORTH, *the Rifle Brigade, youngest son of the late Sir George Duckworth, married* MISS AUDREY DIANA TOLLENAAR *at Holy Trinity, Sloane Street.*

MR. DENIS G. MADDEN, *Irish Guards, son of the late Lieut.-Col. C. G. H. Madden, married* MISS ROSALIND DE KANTZOW *at the Guards' Chapel.*

MISS NANCY HARMOOD-BANNER, *younger daughter of Major Sir Harmood Harmood-Banner, is engaged to* CAPTAIN JAMES JARDINE HUNTER-PATERSON, K.O.S.B.

MISS H. FAUDEL-PHILLIPS, *daughter of Sir L. Faudel-Phillips, married* CAPT. F. NEEDHAM. MR. P. NEEDHAM *was best man.*

Right: MISS MARGARET CAREY-EVANS, *grand-daughter of Mr. Lloyd George, is engaged to Mr. Charles Stuart Low, D.S.O., T.D. She is the elder daughter of Lieut.-Colonel Sir Thomas Carey-Evans.*

MISS ROSEMARY HENDERSON, *younger daughter of Lady (Murrough) Wilson, is shortly to marry Count Robert Orssich.*

MISS M. I. DUKE, *seen with her sister,* MRS. D. PHILIPS *(r.), is engaged to Captain Viscount Erleigh, son of the Marquess of Reading.*

MISS GILLIAN DEARMER, *elder daughter of the late Rev. Percy Dearmer, D.D., is engaged to Sub-Lieut. Richard Addis, R.N.V.R.*

FLIGHT LIEUT. W. F. M. LONGMORE, *second son of Air Chief-Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore, married the* HON. JEAN WILLIAMSON, *only daughter of Lord and Lady Forres, at St. Mark's, North Audley Street.*

SERVICE, AND SHAKESPEARE FROM A RAILWAY TRUCK.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

By L. P. HARTLEY.

CIVILISATIONS decay for many reasons, and one of them undoubtedly is boredom. Rather than be bored, the human race will do almost anything, wage a war, make a revolution, form itself into secret societies with criminal aims; or, when circumstances do not favour such active courses, turn its energies to the contemplation of bull-fights or football matches or long-distance bicycle-races, or to the immoderate adoration of film-stars, airwomen and mothers. All these pursuits, in different degrees, inperil civilisation, for they are all substitutes for thought, and without thought civilisation cannot continue.

A general remedy—which is not definitely anti-intellectual—for boredom has yet to be discovered, but one of its most fertile causes seems to be embedded in the very structure of modern life, and that is repetition. Most people have to do the same thing over and over again every day and a great many of them do not like it.

This charming portrait of a modern chic young girl by Erica Lee called "GREAT GRANDDAUGHTER OF A FIJI CANNIBAL," *is on view at the Royal Academy.*

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The Chinese, on the other hand, seem positively to enjoy repetition, hence, perhaps, the stability of their civilisation, which has outlasted all others. They do not welcome interruption; conquests, floods and epidemics only leave them patiently anxious to return to their former way of life. Nothing illustrates this trait better than their art, which has always been so chary of incorporating new features that the greatest expert often cannot tell, to within several hundred years, what period a picture or a piece of porcelain belongs to. The same conservatism influenced the individual Chinese painter in his choice of subject. If ducks were his speciality, he would go on painting ducks till the end of his life—not, I feel sure, to make a name as a duck-painter, but to arrive ever nearer to his conception of a perfect duck. Repetition for him meant not monotony or boredom, but a gradual approximation to truth. He felt no more ennui in turning out his latest duck than does the chef of the Tour d'Argent (with a less laudable motive) in turning out his.

Changes in China.

Now, however, there seems to be a change in China, and it is this change, or the circumstances leading to it, which give Mr. Carl Crow the subject of his delightful book, "Foreign Devils in the Flowery Kingdom." Mr. Crow's survey of China begins with Marco Polo, that extremely truthful traveller, whose tales (perhaps because they redounded to the credit of the country visited, instead of the other way about) were never believed; but his own experience dates from 1911, when he went to Shanghai as city editor of the *China Press*, until the autumn of 1937, when he and his wife left it on an American destroyer, refugees from Japanese and, it must be admitted, from Chinese bombs.

Business Promotes Civilisation.

In the interval he had become an Old China Hand, with an intricate knowledge of what happens when East meets West. In this book (he has written others about China) he treats his subject in its business and social aspects, rather than from its cultural side. At first the incoming Americans and Europeans, no less than the Chinese, did their utmost to keep themselves to themselves and reproduce, each in his own quarter, a replica of the lives they would have led at home. Though the fabled warning "Dogs and Chinese not Admitted" never actually was posted on the gate of a park in the International Settlement of Shanghai, its spirit presided over the attitude of the visitors to their Chinese hosts. At first, too, with the honourable exception of the missionaries, most of the foreigners were out for what they could get.

> Several generations of diplomats who were accredited to the Manchu Court of Peking carried on their duties with only one general object in view, which was to chisel as much as possible out of this great hulk of a country. "They surround us like wolves," cried the old Empress Dowager, with feminine disdain for diplomatic restraint.

The Chinese, on their side, thoroughly despised the invading barbarians—

> Their entire lack of the ordinary decent feelings was shown by the fact that so many of them would voluntarily live so far away from the tombs of their ancestors and that their compatriots would allow them to be buried on foreign soil.

But, being a tolerant race, they began to find excuses for the intruders, and "loving honourable trade" (in Flecker's phrase), to do business with them; after which the buccaneering element gradually disappeared.

Business promotes civilisation, and the hybrid civilisation that Mr. Crow describes had many pleasant features, even if it was rather too dependent on clubs and bars and chota pegs. In one respect, at least, East and West seem to have met with perfect satisfaction to both: nothing could exceed in cordiality and amiability the relations between the foreign devils and their Chinese servants. Impending changes in China will sweep away this mushroom growth of a cosmopolitan society—a matter for regret, not only to "old China Hands" like Mr. Crow, but also to the readers who, thanks to his extremely well-informed, tolerant and good-natured account, have enjoyed its amenities and realised its limitations in his company.

Great Virtuoso.

Paganini is a romantic and exciting name, the name of one of the greatest virtuosi in the history of music. Virtuosity is not so impressive, I believe, to the musician as it is to the general public; the spectacular element which appeals to the one leaves the other wondering how much of the composer's intention is being fulfilled in this display of manual dexterity. But great executants have also been great musicians, Chopin and Liszt, for instance; and among them, if not in the highest flight of musicianship, can be reckoned Paganini.

Legends have gathered round his name, the most sensational being the story of his compact with the Devil, immortalised in the famous "trill." The title of Mr. Manuel Komroff's novel, "The Magic Bow," suggests that he is going to make this famous bargain the keynote of his story, and I confess I looked forward to the Devil's first appearance. But Mr. Komroff does not countenance the Devil legend, though he explains how it arose, and tells how the monk who, believing it to be an instrument of the Evil One, broke the "magic" bow, afterwards did a thoroughly enjoyable penance for his act. Paganini was on the best of terms with the Church; Cardinal Michelotto was one of his first patrons, and in between concerts he spent much time in a monastery, practising; and it was there that the report of his association with Satan originated.

"THE LATE JAMES PRYDE," *by James Gunn, is one of two paintings he is showing at the Royal Academy this year. The other is a self-portrait. "The Doctor"—also on view, one of James Pryde's last works in his romantic manner—is a Chantrey Bequest purchase.*

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Genius and Hard Work.

His phenomenal success was really due to a combination of genius and hard work. Circumstances were against him, as they have been against many geniuses. His father was a Genoese dock-labourer, who not only disapproved of the youthful Nicolò's musical aspirations, but discouraged them in a particularly ingenious and galling

[Continued overleaf.

The cruel Chancellor has decreed
That luxuries like fine spun hose
Must fall as victims to the need
Of yet more arms against our foes.

So patriotic girls no more
Can clothe their legs in silken sheen,
As was their pleasant wont before.
No longer in the shops are seen,

To hide the shin's unearthly white,
That some (not I) considered crude,
Colours—I hope I 've got them right—
Like " nigger," " sun-tan," " beech " and " nude "

But you, Denise, epitome,
From tip of toe to cheeky hat
Of every grace, will never be
Put out by little things like that.

And so, since Woman paints her face,
Legs too you 'll paint (or do I dream ?)
And with an eye-brow pencil trace
A line to simulate the seam.

And walking up and down the land
(Oh, Woman, Woman !) you will try
To make the quickness of the hand—
I mean the leg—deceive the eye.

So be it ! But I must insist,
Although you strive from morn till night
Unless you 're a contortionist,
You 'll never get the damn thing right.

So let me help you ! Every one
Must do his bit in times like these ;
The hours of idleness are gone :
This is a man's work, dear Denise.

My eye is keen, my hand is true,
You 'll find I have my own Design,
I 'll call on you to-night, and you
Shall tell me where to draw the line.

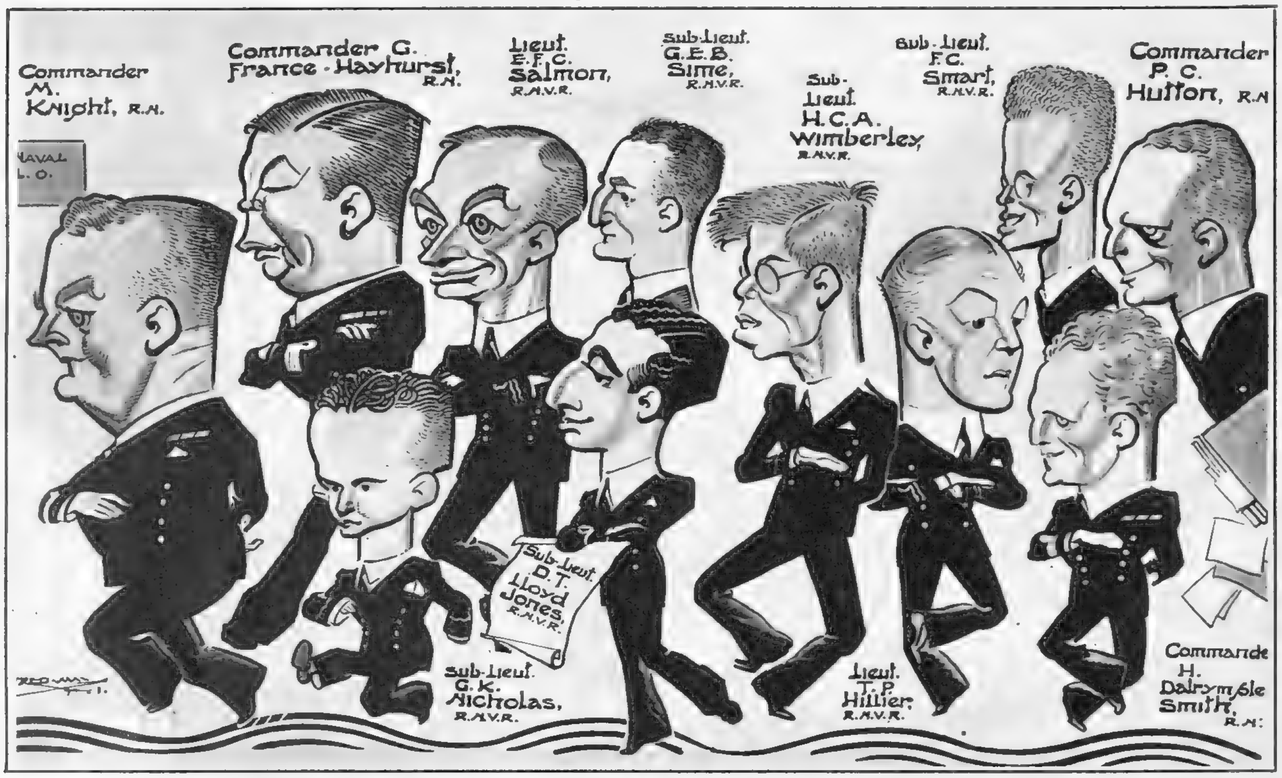
JAMES LAVER.

FOR DENISE WHO PROPOSES TO PAINT HER LEGS.

DRAWN BY FELIKS TOPOLSKI, TEXT BY JAMES LAVER, LITHOGRAPHED IN ENGLAND AT THE BAYNARD PRESS, LONDON, AND PUBLISHED BY PENGUIN BOOKS, LTD., OF HARMONDSWORTH.
PENGUIN PRINT NO. 4.

Continued.]

way, by always taunting his son with the spectacular financial success of the infant Mozart. It is not surprising that Nicolò could not hear this composer's name without flying into a passion. But neither obscurity nor poverty could keep him mute and inglorious—certainly not mute. Extemporising, he would begin softly and slowly, but end by playing very fast and (one suspects) very loud ; at least, this is the impression we get from Mr. Komroff. In tracing his musical career, the author dwells more on the technical difficulties he overcame, and often created in order to overcome, than on the quality of his interpretations or the kind of music he liked to play. The development of the violin as an instrument, however, makes a fascinating study : the names of Amati, Guarnerius and Stradivarius disengage themselves from the romantic past and become full of practical meaning. In no department of his story is Mr. Komroff more successful than in conveying the passionate absorption in his art which guides the artist's life. Paganini was ambitious in many ways. He wanted money, he wanted fame, he wanted love. A casual meeting with a law-student who afterwards became his " manager " took some of the financial responsibility off his hands ; fame came the moment he could make himself heard (we gather that the prison-built Guarnerius had exceptional



THE NAVAL LIAISON SECTION, R.N., *shown here are on very intelligent duties ashore, we can't say where, and we can't say more ; but they are highly trained, intensely observant, and always on the* qui vive.

CARICATURES BY FRED MAY.

carrying power) ; but love, or at any rate the legitimate enjoyment of love, tarried. Countess Janne de Vermond, who presided so romantically over the first flowering of his genius, gave him everything he asked except her hand. That she withheld out of deference to her mother's snobbery, and the two lovers were separated for many years, to be finally granted a joyous reunion in Vienna.

In spite of this cloud, the vitality that surges through it, the irresistible *élan* of a great talent fulfilling itself against all obstacles and winning for itself the most intoxicating public recognition, makes " The Magic Bow " a happy and stimulating book. The more so, perhaps, because one of the obstacles to happiness—the tottering state of Europe, reeling under the blows Napoleon was raining on it—reminds us of our own day. Mr. Komroff has taken trouble with his historical background ; and certain episodes—the glimpse of the Queen of Naples and Lady Hamilton and Nelson at Leghorn, the tiny sketch of Schubert at the end—are unforgettable. Mr. Komroff's English is hasty and unreliable, but he has the supreme qualification of the historical novelist—the past is living to him, and he makes it live for us.

Characters Worth Meeting. Taken together, the dust-cover and title of " The Man in the Turkish Bath " are enough to give the reader a mistrust of washing for the rest of his life ; but if a cursory glance decides him to leave it unread, he will be missing a good deal of pleasure, though it is not easy to define the exact source of that pleasure. Earnest seekers after new and recondite clues will find no satisfaction here ; lovers of mass murder will have to put up with a single crime ; and admirers of heroes who know neither fear, hesitation, nor defeat will find a young man who spent many hours reading up his subject in library books, who did not carry firearms and who, far from being the darling of the gods, was treated roughly by fate as well as by his enemies. But if he can forego all this, the reader will be rewarded by meeting characters whose acquaintance he would not willingly have missed, and by a picture of life in Paris which Mr. Fletcher Moulton has made almost painfully nostalgic.

Horror and Humour. Miss Monica Stanton, of St. Jude's Vicarage, East Roystead, Herts, has achieved fame as the writer of a best-seller. This results in her engagement by a cinema producer to write film scripts. The producer confessed to having read Miss Stanton's masterpiece and to having wondered how most of it had got past the censor. The opinion of William Cartwright was more precise :

" I say nothing of bad grammar and worse syntax. I say nothing of a prose style that would sink a battleship. I say nothing of the priggish ass of a hero, Captain What's-his-name. I say nothing of the pornographic mind of the woman who wrote it."

In face of these criticisms it would be comforting to find that the dangerous situations in which Monica becomes involved were engineered by a misguided if single-minded member of a society for promoting Moral Purity. But alas, the explanation is far less edifying.

Nevertheless, the master-detective is in fine form, and almost more himself than usual ; one does not wonder that William Cartwright was cautioned against speaking on controversial subjects, but the warning tended to restrict conversation. " And So to Murder " is written on a lighter note than Mr. Carter Dickson has sometimes struck in the past ; the incursions of Mr. Aaronson and the Duke of Wellington give a sportive air to the horror of attempted murder, though in one scene at least Mr. Dickson reaffirms his power to make our flesh creep. The solution is a bold experiment that few authors would have had the courage or the humour to attempt.

BOOKS REVIEWED.

Foreign Devils in the Flowery Kingdom. By Carl Crow. (*Hamish Hamilton* ; 10s. 6d.)

The Magic Bow. By Manuel Komroff. (*Heinemann* ; 9s. 6d.)

The Man in the Turkish Bath. By H. Fletcher Moulton. (*Longmans* ; 7s. 6d.)

And So to Murder. By Carter Dickson. (*Heinemann* ; 7s. 6d.)

OUR NEW SERIES OF COLOUR-PLATES—THE ELEVENTH NEXT WEEK.

The first of our new plates in full colour by Mr. David Wright was published in our issue of January 1, 1941, and NEXT WEEK, MAY 14, WE ARE PRESENTING THE ELEVENTH *of this amusing and delightful series. We decided to publish these plates in order to brighten the hours of leisure of our naval men, soldiers and airmen, and their popularity has even exceeded our expectations. There are few wardrooms, cabins, messes and billets of serving men whose walls are not now adorned with* " DAVID WRIGHT GIRLS," *and many members of the Civil Defence services find that these sprightly works of art help to enliven their lonely posts. We are publishing the plates loose in the numbers so that they may be removed by those who wish to pin them up.*

"The Last Time I Saw Paris": with MARY HINTON (the Hon. Mrs. Pitt-Rivers) as Mme. Balalaika.

"THE SPITFIRE REVUE" BY CHELSEA A.R.P.

The HON. PAMELA STANLEY and MAX KIRBY as Cinderella and Buttons in a number with Temple Abady music.

"Regency Revels": Wellington (ROY BARLING), Miss Arbuthnot (PAMELA STANLEY), Lady Ashburnham (CATHERINE KIRBY), Edmund Kean as Shylock (NEIL PORTER), Harriette Wilson (MARY HINTON), and the Prince Regent (MAX KIRBY).

TONY GORDON as the Chelsea Pensioner, with members of the Stretcher Party chorus giving "Soldiers of the King." The background shows where Cremorne Gardens once stood.

CATHERINE KIRBY and COURTNEY HUME in the dramatic sketch "Silk Stockings," by the Hon. Theodora Benson.

MARY HINTON, PAMELA STANLEY and CATHERINE KIRBY in "The Women's Army."

"THE SPITFIRE REVUE," produced by Hedley Briggs and presented by Courtney Hume and Max Kirby, is yet another of the now-famous shows which Chelsea A.R.P. Depôt No. 1 has given to wartime London. It was in aid of the Chelsea "Spitfire" Fund.

COURTNEY HUME as a taxi-driver giving "The London That I Love," introduction to "London Pride."

CARELESS TALK.*

By M. ST. CLAIRE BYRNE.

IT was very hot in the park—very hot and very quiet. Even the traffic roar hardly reached them as they picked their way between sweating sun-worshippers sprawled on the grass. " Come to think of it, the war *has* done that much for us," the Colonel remarked, as he settled her in a deck-chair in his own particular shady corner. Part of his time-table, it had become, to sit there each afternoon, reading, thinking, dozing, thinking . . . come to think of it, he was glad to see Janet again. It was a good idea to ask her to lunch with him . . . damn bore being shut up for weeks on end with seven other men . . . you missed seeing women about . . . no one to talk to. . . . Janet was a grand woman to talk to, and shrewd (yes, for a certainty, she had intelligence) . . . and not looking a day older . . . . Oh, God ! she thought. One can almost *see* him thinking all the " little woman " *clichés* ! He *can't* be as dumb as he looks. It 's not possible.

" Harry, do tell me about the job. I don't want to ask indiscreet questions, but I do love hearing about what you 're doing."

" Well, there isn't anything particularly exciting to tell you. We just sit there, and decode, and send the stuff through to the proper quarter—all that sort of thing. Of course, we never see anyone ; no one allowed inside the grounds. So, as I say, it 's a bit dull, y' know . . ." His trailing, inconclusive sentence spread dullness itself, like a blight . . . but one must pay for one's lunch, draw him out, get him to talk—he wants to talk. . . .

" Didn't you say there had been a leakage, or something—and that was why you were up in town ? " *Had* he said it ?

" Well, yes. It 's an amazing yarn really."

" Can you tell me ? Or is this too public a place for it ? "

" Not unless that 's Goering disguised as a blimp. It 's rather his figure." They both gazed in silence at the shining silver balloon floating almost directly above them.

" I suppose that man over there really is out of earshot ? " His eyes followed the direction of her glance. There was a man lying flat on his back, stretched out on the grass.

" He 's much too far away, even if he weren't asleep." His smile was reassuring, " little-womanly," fatuous ; her mind said. " Is he asleep ? " " Matter of fact, he 's deaf. Didn't you see him sitting at the next table to us at lunch ? He presented the waitress with a sort of miniature microphone to speak into, and even then she had to shout to make him hear."

" Did you trace it ? " she asked. " The leakage, I mean ? "

" I suppose you know that we deal with times, and locations, and destinations, and that sort of thing ? "

" Yes," she admitted. " I did know that. Well ? "

" Well, things happened. Accidents. One or two rather nasty ones. We never thought of connecting them with our end—not at first. Who would ? Just the eight of us ; cut off from the outside world ; all letters out passing through my hands. And then a Personage arrived on the scene, and, to cut a long story short, by the time we 'd finished our talk, I knew and he knew that information was leaking through to the enemy ; and there wasn't a shadow of doubt but that someone in my team was responsible. I can tell you, I felt pretty grim. The last thing they 'd got was a transport—total loss. I can tell you, I felt like the worst kind of murderer."

" Harry, how frightful ! Hadn't you *any* suspicion who it was ? "

" My dear girl, they were picked men, every one of them. It was nightmarish. I began to wonder whether I 'd done it myself ! And the only telephone in the place was controlled by me—absolutely controlled. . . ."

" But it 's quite easy to tap a line, isn't it ? "

He smiled gently. Getting into his stride. " It didn't take me very long to check up on that. No ; if anyone was under suspicion on that score, I was."

" Did you try setting a trap ? "

" Traps ? I should think so ! But the leakages went on. I tell you that last week-end nearly finished me. They got a troop-train on the Wednesday. And that information came from us, because the day and the route and the time were our decision. I 'd worked through them all, one by one, and in varied groups, and nothing had gone wrong. As soon as it was a question of the whole team, there was another . . . accident. So on the Thursday morning I came up to town to tell them I was throwing in my hand."

" My poor Harry ! What a beastly business ! "

" Well, I wired Hilary to meet me for lunch at the Club. Felt I wanted a little human comfort before the ordeal."

" Hilary ? " She looked puzzled. " I thought . . ."

" We went back to her flat after lunch, and I gave her an idea of the situation ; just enough, you know, to let her understand why I was worried. But she wasn't having anything of that. She fairly put me through it. You 'd have been surprised the way she got the facts out of me [" Not difficult, my dear," was her unspoken comment.] . . . made me give her a sort of picture . . . anything the matter ? "

" No, nothing. Do go on."

" Well, as I was saying, she made me describe everything I could remember about every one of my chaps. Looks, habits, hobbies, tricks, little ways—you know the sort of thing. A complete picture, in fact. Amazed me, the amount I did know about them. Kamsley and his stamps — began collecting as a kid ; Drysdale and his photography — absolute expert — and can fake anything, too—but, as I told her, he just had not got a camera with him, and, anyway, where could a camera come in ? "

" Well, if he hadn't *got* a camera . . ."

" Exactly ! What I said to her. Then there was Jefferson, with his gramophone and his folk songs—funny the way these chaps of mine all seem to be sort of specialists in side-lines like this. Actually, Jefferson was the only one that you might say I really had tabs on, simply because of his hobby : because he was always whistling or singing about the place, so that you couldn't help knowing where he was. Then I told her about little Millachip. He spends his whole time poring over maps and reading up strategy and military history. And I 'd as soon suspect myself as him. And old Gaukroger, now : only thing he really cares about is bird-watching ; which means he has a very fine pair of field-glasses. But, damn it all, the man was at school with me ; he 's my age ; I 've known him all my life. Anyhow, I told her about the lot of them—every mortal thing I could think of. Made me laugh, the way she put in questions and jotted down notes ! I asked her if she meant to set up as a private detective when she left College ! And all she said to that was, would I please reconstruct for her that test evening when we were all in the workroom together, and somebody got the stuff through."

" Were you able to remember ? "

" I 'd been over it in my own mind a hundred times. It was a sweltering night, even with all the windows open. Everybody was in his shirt-sleeves. She made me draw a plan of the room ; and she wanted to know where everyone was sitting, and where they went, and what they did whenever they moved about."

" Why did you call it the test evening ? "

" At eight o'clock we sent out instructions for departure at ten o'clock and no one left that room until midnight. No one spoke on the telephone except myself. And at eleven they got that transport." He was telling it well. He could see the authentic shiver as he made his deliberate pause.

" How awful, Harry ! Tell me what you told Hilary."

" We knocked off about a quarter past eight for food. Mind you, I 'd had it all brought in beforehand ; and nothing was cleared away till we left the room at midnight. No one had anything much to say while we ate. It was too hot. They were all a bit bored and fidgety at not being allowed to knock off as usual. After supper old Gauk did *The Times* crossword. Millachip smoked and dozed and woke up with a start, and began reading the last volume of Churchill's ' Life of Marlborough,' till Kamsley took it from him because he 'd got it to read for himself. Jefferson was sorting out a pile of old music, and whistling or humming bits of it over to himself. I looked at the stuff afterwards—just a lot of old things like ' Bonnie Mary of Argyle ' and ' Annie Laurie ' and all that sort of thing. Hilary made me try and remember the lot of them ! and then she wanted to know which ones he sang or whistled, and what chapter Kamsley was reading ; and what happened to Gaukroger's *Times*—in fact, every blessed thing."

" But do you mean to say you could remember what everybody did during the whole evening ? "

" Pretty well. Millachip wandered about restlessly after Kamsley took his book away from him. He stood by the window for five or six minutes, watching the sunset. I kept my eyes on him the whole time ; but he never took his hands out of his pockets, and he just leant there, looking out ; and then he turned away and went and sat down to his work. Mind you, I was watching the other fellows too, all the time. Old Gauk asked : ' What 's a mystagogue in ten letters ? ' Jefferson put his feet up on a chair to hold his music on his knees while he filled his pipe. He knocked it out on the stone hearth, and he was whistling some tune or other that sounded vaguely familiar, and that one bit of my mind said I 'd

[Continued overleaf

* *All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

THE SEVEN AGES OF KITTY FOYLE.

GINGER ROGERS'S performance in " Kitty Foyle," RKO Radio's picture due at the Gaumont, Haymarket, on May 4, won her the " Oscar " (Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences Award) for the best acting of the year. Kitty first appears as ambitious sixteen, then at college and in her first job. Love disappointment sends her to New York, where she [Continued below.

Schoolgirl—GINGER ROGERS *as eager sixteen.*

Girl graduate, just leaving college.

Chic *New Yorker, but disappointed in love.*

Business débutante, enthusiastic over her very first job.

Happy bride, with her socialite husband, Wyn (DENNIS MORGAN).

Successful business woman, but divorced.

finds a post as a beauty-shop expert and meets a young doctor who falls deeply in love with her. Her old sweetheart reappears and she marries him, but his snobbish family wreck the *ménage*. There is a divorce; subsequently Kitty's baby is born, but it dies; she keeps this secret, sticks to her career and gains success. She has decided to accept the faithful doctor, when her ex-husband reappears, unhappily married, and begs her to go away with him. Kitty is a mature woman of twenty-six, and faces this big decision with balance and courage. The rôle provides Ginger Rogers with a splendid opportunity of displaying her powers as an emotional actress, and she gives a striking picture of the development of the young girl into the woman who has experienced worldly success, sorrow, disappointment and love.

Experienced woman, faced with her biggest decision.

Continued.]

recognise it if I wasn't concentrating on Millachip over by the window *and* trying to keep half an eye on the others.

"Kamsley looked up from his book and said: 'Will "hierophant" do?' And old Gauk said: 'Got him! Yes." And wrote it in. Drysdale looked up from the letter he was writing—yes, I read it afterwards, of course, and it was perfectly harmless—to his mother; and anyway, you see, it didn't go till next morning—and he said: 'And what 's a "hierophant," anyway?' Millachip said, in a flat, damping sort of way, 'It 's a priest.' Drysdale said: 'I 've heard of an olyphant. It 's a horn'—rather pleased with himself, you know. And Kamsley said, in his rather superior way: '*Alias* elephant.' And Jefferson caught my eye and grinned rather sardonically and whistled that teasing little bit of tune over again. Kamsley and Drysdale were always sparring, you know. And then Millachip turned away from the window; and I said: 'Time to black out,' and went over and fixed the blinds myself. And then everybody started work again, and nothing whatever happened till I sent them off at midnight."

"And now you 've told me all you told Hilary?"

"All the bits that matter."

"You mean, this is the point where I ought to be able to guess who it was?"

"If you can, you 'll be better at this game than I was."

"Do go on!"

"Well, she asked me the deuce of a lot more questions, looked up 'hierophant' in the dictionary, made me try and reproduce the tune Jefferson had been whistling, and said she thought it was vaguely familiar . . ."

"How did it go? I wonder if I know it?" He whistled a tune, "That 's the sort of way it goes. Know it?"

"I don't think I do."

"She made me promise to send her a full list of all books, maps, gramophone records, music, and every other bit of personal property those chaps had. Which I did."

"And do you mean to tell me that she really put you on the track?"

For answer he drew a letter from his pocket, and began to read it aloud. "This is what I got from her the day after she had my list:

Daddy, Darling.—The answer is "Folk-songs, my foot!" There isn't a single genuine folk-song in that whole list! They 're just popular English songs, mostly eighteenth century, that everyone knows; *and they are just cram-full of place names*. Even you, my sweet, must know that it was on Maxwelltoun Braes that your dear Annie Laurie, whom you habitually invoke in your bath, gave you her promise true. And I should have thought you might have known that "the boat rocks at the pier of Leith." But I 'll forgive you "Black-eyed Susan" as just a trifle precious. All the same, it was Susan who gave the show away. The first line of that poem is, "All in the Downs the fleet was moor'd." So you see, my pet, when he sat there, sorting out his music and whistling that pretty little tune that fortunately stuck in your woolly head, he was just handing out the information without even bothering to code it. Dam' cheek! I suppose he keyed the time with the pipe taps? Or do you think it was the number of times he whistled the thing over? By the way, was "Pier of Leith" equally naked and unashamed at the time? Or mustn't I ask? Anyway, now you know! Go to It!

All love. Your Hilary.

He folded it up carefully, put it back in his wallet, and stowed the wallet in his breast pocket. He was proud of that letter.

"Harry, it 's awful of me, but—where are the Downs?"

He smiled the "thank-God-for-female-ignorance" smile. "They 're a roadstead."

"And Hilary was right? It was Jefferson?"

"It was the man who 'd managed to pass himself off as Jefferson for the last few months. We don't know—yet—what happened to the real Jefferson. He started off from London all right. . ."

"Do you mean he was kidnapped?"

"Murdered, more likely."

"But how did they know about him?"

"First-rate intelligence work; plus that little bit of careless talk which enables these gentry to put the pieces of the puzzle together and bring off that sort of job. Too many people knew where he was going. The servants at his home admit they knew; several of his friends knew; and people in the village say they 'd 'heard'—so there you are. Well, no doubt 'they' had heard—from someone—about Jefferson. So the spy took his chance. And his luck was in—until we put him up in front of a firing-party."

"Beastly!" She gave a little shiver. "Someone walking over my grave! It 's horrible the way we 're becoming suspicious of everybody."

He was courteously concerned. "You know, it 's getting a bit chilly here in the shade. What about moving on, shall we?"

"*That* 's a lie," she thought. "I can see the little beads of sweat on his nose." Aloud she said: "I think I really ought to be getting back now." Pat came the correct answer; it was that that was so frightening: "Well, if you really must. We 'll pick up a taxi at the gates. I 'm going your way." What had happened to him, to his mind? This man was a complete stranger; he was stupid—blah! Fantastic imaginings of identical twins flashed through her mind as he escorted her to the gates—flashed—escorted—he can't even talk like a human being—he 's thinking, talking, living in *clichés*, and I 'm catching it from him . . . and he 's handsomer than ever.

The man in the panama hat lay sprawled in the sunshine. The sweat streamed down his face, his mouth sagged slightly open, and he breathed as if he were in an uneasy sleep. About five minutes after Janet and the Colonel had disappeared, he stretched and sat up and looked round him. He mopped his face and neck with a large handkerchief, and anyone who was watching him closely might have observed that, as he did so, he removed a small black plug from his ear, and then wrapped the thin cord attached to it round a small microphone lying beside him in the shadow between his upper arm and his body. He slipped it into his coat pocket as casually as if it had been a tobacco-pouch, stood up, and walked off briskly towards the park gates. He had got what he wanted.

As they came out of the park gates, the thing that had been nagging away at the back of her mind suddenly thrust through into consciousness. She stopped dead in her tracks.

"Harry! Am I mad, or are you? Hilary went down last year. And she hasn't been off duty for a single day since March. She couldn't have been in London, lunching with you . . ." A crawling taxi approached, and he signalled to it. "Here we are!" He had opened the door, seized her elbow, and almost bundled her in before the driver could lean across to pull his flag down.

If he had not been so pleased with his afternoon's work the man in the panama hat might have noticed that two men mounted the bus when he did, that one of them dismounted at the same stop as himself, and that the other jumped off a moment later when it was held up by traffic lights. But he had got what he wanted, and a week of boring, fruitless but unhindered shadowing had given him a feeling of security. Moreover, he had an important decision to make. Nothing save the most exceptional circumstances was held to justify a personal visit to headquarters. . . . He was so pleased with the way he had fooled his handsome, chattering fool, so pleased to discover he was a mere man of straw, who kept his brains in his daughter's head and not in his own, so pleased at the result of his week's faithful watching—God! the boredom!—that he was quite genuinely taken by surprise when they arrested him on the doorstep.

The Colonel snapped a quick-fire direction to the driver, banged the taxi-door behind him, and sank down on the seat.

"I suppose I ought to apologise for using a lady as ground-bait, without first asking permission: but in my line of business you have to seize the opportunity when it offers."

"'Ground-bait'?"

"Yes. You know, the stuff you lay down to attract the fish to the fishing-ground. And do they eat it! That will be the third mug I 've landed, just with hot air and blether." Seeing her puzzled expression, he went on: "The mug with the microphone listening-in to us. You see, ever since the powers-that-be decided that with my face I looked like God's own gift to the Fifth Column, I 've been loosed as the world's prize indiscretion! Well, honest, now, don't I look like it?"

"You mean, your face is your fortune?"

The handsome mask cracked into a delighted grin. "I say, I hope you liked Hilary's letter? Personally, I think it was rather good for an impromptu effort."

"Hilary's letter? Do you mean that story wasn't true?"

"The success of a jest lies in the ear of the hearer," he misquoted at her.

"Yes, but was it true?"

"Not a blessed word of it!"

[The End.

FANNY HURST'S "BACK STREET" ON THE SCREEN.

Love at first sight: Walter Saxel (CHARLES BOYER) *is introduced to Ray Smith* (MARGARET SULLAVAN).

The jovial Harry (FRANK JENKS) *offers to drive Ray to the wharf to meet Saxel.*

"Mr. and Mrs. Smith": Walter Saxel and Ray Smith, the woman "in the back street of his life."

Ray is persuaded to return to Saxel instead of marrying her old admirer, Curt Stanton.

Richard Saxel (TIM HOLT) *calls on Ray and reviles her for her influence on his father.*

"BACK STREET," based on Fanny Hurst's novel, was due at the Odeon, Leicester Square, on May 5. Ray is a Cincinnati girl, with a devoted admirer, Curt Stanton. She and Walter Saxel fall in love at first sight, but he is on his way to marry his fiancée, so they say good-bye. A message comes asking Ray to meet Saxel at the quay, but Harry offers her a lift and caddishly takes her to the country, so she misses Saxel. Ray meets Saxel in New York. She helps him and gives him the happiness he misses in his home. He goes to Europe and she decides to break with him and marry Curt, but he over-persuades her. In Paris Saxel's son finds Ray and reviles her. Saxel overhears and dies of a heart attack, while Ray is left destitute.

Richard Saxel, with his father, Walter, who is dying as the result of a heart attack.

CITY NOTES.

OUR STROLLER IN THROGMORTON STREET.

"AND what is your idea of an expensive mess ?" the broker asked. "You say that your own half-a-crown a day is moderate. What would you call expensive ? Always excluding drinks, of course."

The Captain said that his brother's mess-bill was seven shillings a day. "He has a bit of money in War stock. If he hadn't, I think he would find it a tight fit to manage. Yes, he 's married. Couple of kiddies, too."

"There must be a good many folks who are in a similar sort of position. I don't mean only in the Services. Those whose incomes are dependent on the interest from their investments must find things difficult, at the present time."

"You have to get ten per cent. on your money if you want five per cent. net."

"Safety and ten per cent. don't seem to synchronise," remarked the partner. "Oh, yes ; I know there are shares to be had that will yield ten per cent.——"

"Outside the mining markets ?"

"Rubber shares will pay ten per cent."

"If you can buy them," the broker observed.

"And amongst other industrials, you occasionally stumble across a ten-per-cent. return."

"Yes, but from shares you wouldn't care to buy for your maiden aunt. We don't find clients over-anxious to take more risk than 's necessary."

"Well, you can't have five per cent. net, with Income-Tax at ten bob in the pound, without taking a chance nowadays."

"These War Weapons Weeks mop up a tidy slice of your money," Our Stroller commented. "Pretty wonderful in their results, aren't they ? How much will the City of London effort realise next month ?"

"Several millions," the partner estimated. "My small boy found a ten-shilling note in the street the other day, when we had a local War Weapons Week. He dashed home, emptied his money-box, coaxed another shilling out of his mother, and bought a National Savings Certificate with the fifteen shillings."

"Good laddie !"

"He showed me the certificate, and said to me, on the strict Q.T., 'It 's all right, daddy. I 'm going to cash it after War Weapons Week is over !'"

"There 's a good deal of human nature in a small boy," Our Stroller laughed. "And daddy no doubt gave him the money to buy another certificate if he promised to keep the first. So the nation benefited after all."

"The national effort has to be a hundred per cent.," the partner half-apologised ; "otherwise this war 's going to take us a long time to win——"

"General Electrics can't possibly hurt you," a dealer in the House told the enquiring broker, "but you must wait for the end of the war before you 're likely to see a profit."

"I should say the same about J. & P. Coats, or Imperial Chemicals, or Dunlops."

"Why not Imperial Tobacco ? Or Distillers ? Or Vickers ?"

"Why not, indeed ? The trouble is that you don't get much of a net return from any of them. Might as well buy Defence Threes, I should say."

"It 's not everyone," another broker objected, "who can afford to take as low as three per cent. Most of us have to mix other things with our National investments, to raise the average return."

He picked up a list of industrial ordinary shares, marked "For Private Circulation Only," and studied the yields.

"Woolworths give you 7 per cent.," he quoted. "Imperial Chemicals, $5\frac{1}{2}$; Marks and Spencer, a bit over 6 ; J. & P. Coats, 7 ; Morris Motors, $7\frac{1}{2}$; Courtaulds, $5\frac{1}{2}$; Boots, $4\frac{1}{2}$——"

"On the last-paid dividends," he was reminded. "You can't bank on these with any certainty, you know."

"No need for you to tell that to an old hand——"

"Regular museum-piece, aren't you !"

"But you ought to be able to get 6 per cent. gross from a judicious blending of industrials."

"If British Electric Traction deferred stock stood at something less lordly than 800, I 'd recommend that to anybody. Pays a little more than $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the money, and is very safe. But the price puts it out of the ordinary man's reach."

"You can buy ten pounds-worth if you want to. Or why not suggest Thomas Tilling shares ? The two concerns are closely connected. Tillings pay $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to a bit over."

"Too gilt-edged. Oh, it's a fine company, I agree. But the yield isn't enough for the sort of chap I 'm thinking about. Now if——"

Three strident pips from the loud-speakers round the House arrested every man's attention. All other noise died away. The waiters ceased calling from their pulpits. A few men turned quietly to nearby benches. A few others moved into positions where they could hear better. Nowadays it is a serious business, this daily one o'clock broadcast in the Stock Exchange. Determination of its length is left to official discretion.

Throughout the House there was a silence that could be felt. The tension relaxed only when the signal to cease was passed to the Capel Court lobby.

"Rather dramatic," Our Stroller commented. "Keys you up more than listening to it on your own set at home. I wonder whether it will be as exciting as this a year hence. Or two years. Or——"

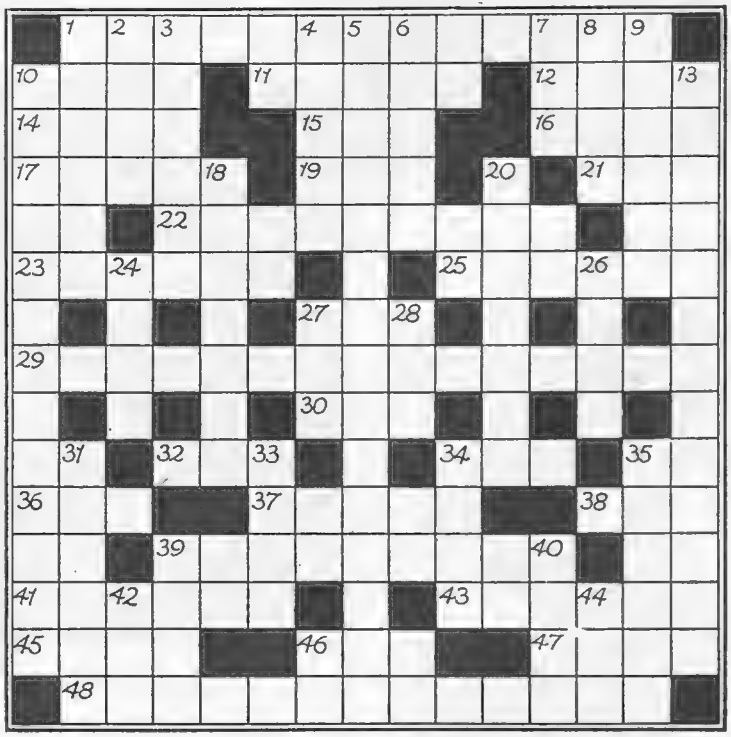
"What rot !" a well-known broker exclaimed. "From the way some of you chaps talk, one would think we shall never see things any different from what they are now. Lend to Defend ! Thrift and Three per cent. ! The war won't last for ever. Get that fact firmly fixed in your noddle, and you 'll be only too glad to lend——"

"Can I borrow half-a-crown until after lunch ?"

"Sorry, old man. I only lend one half-crown at a time ; and that happens to be out. Come and see me next week. Cheerio !"

Friday, May 2, 1941.

"THE SKETCH" CROSS-WORD PUZZLE.



ACROSS.

1. Disputes (13).
10. Mural decoration (4).
11. Public vehicles cleverly upset (5).
12. Murderous Eugene (4).
14. Metal (4).
15. Prophet (3).
16. River (4).
17. This needs dressing (5).
19. Firm friend of electricity (initials ; 3).
21. Chewed by a cow (3).
22. Aged relative (9).
23. Say or do again (6).
25. Old remedy for colds (6).
27. With her on your arm you 're afloat (3).
29. Sleight-of-hand performer (15).
30. Number (3).
32. In play (3).
34. Exclaim (3).
36. Black sailor ? (3).
37. In the country (5).
38. Religious palindrome (3).
39. One who makes blessed (9).
41. Bird of its own 46 Across (6).
43. Place in Italy (6).
45. Probably an Irish girl (4).
46. Object (3).
47. Horological palindrome (4).
48. Display (13).

DOWN.

1. It usually holds water (6).
2. Patent mouth-wash (4).
3. Minority (6).
4. Last letter from Greece (5).
5. Health cranks (15).
6. Heath covering most of America (5).
7. Doubtless a Scot (3).
8. He makes the most of 6 Down (4).
9. Military greeting (6).
10. "Poor spirit, Don !" (anag. ; 13).
13. Sea of troubles for Musso (13).
18. Violent disruption of stair in district of Columbia (7).
20. Fast ball ! Yes, bit of a —— (7).
24. Argument (4).
26. Building land (4).
27. Fuss (3).
28. Period (3).
31. Payment for Norma's release (6).
33. Waiter's burden (4).
34. Fastener (4).
35. Famous Viceroy (6).
39. Edible form of farm building (4).
40. Hindu queen (4).
42. Leader of British art (initials ; 3).
44. Animal internment camp (3).

N.B.—No clues are given to two-letter spaces.

TAMING A SINGING TARTAR—"THERE'S MAGIC IN MUSIC."

Sylvia Worth (MARGARET LINDSAY) *and Michael Maddy have a little trouble with Toodles, whom they are trying to reform.*

Taming a prima donna! Michael Maddy (ALLAN JONES) *and George Thomas* (LYNNE OVERMAN) *duck Toodles LaVerne* (SUSANNA FOSTER).

"THERE'S MAGIC IN MUSIC" is a new Paramount picture due at the Plaza on May 2. Toodles LaVerne and Maidie Duvalle give a singing and dancing act in a cheap burlesque theatre which is effectively and hilariously raided by the police. Michael Maddy, son of the head of the Interlochen music camp for youth, where students receive training from world-famous musicians, persuades [*Continued below.*

KAYE CONNOR, *fifteen-year-old violinist and singer, as herself, giving a number at the Interlochen music camp for youth.*

MARGARET LINDSAY *as the charming efficiency expert at the Interlochen music camp.*

the judge to release her, provided she attends the Interlochen camp in charge of him and George Thomas, as she has such a fine voice. Toodles nearly wrecks the camp, but is finally transformed into a serious-minded artist. Metropolitan opera stars Richard Bonelli and Irra Petina, as well as musical prodigies, including fifteen-year-old Kaye Connor, are featured in this gay musical picture.

GRACE BRADLEY, *as Maidie Duvalle, giving her Dance of the Seven Veils in a cheap burlesque theatre.*

WOMEN IN WARTIME

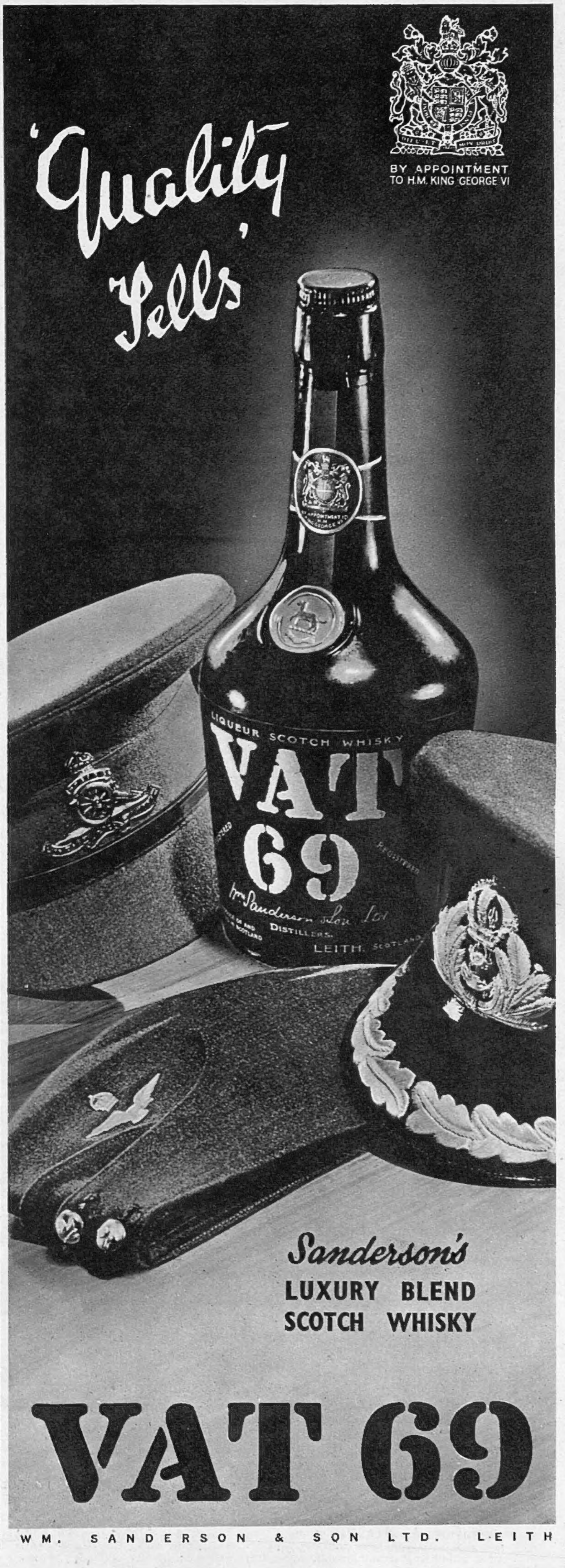
MODERN MAYTIME

PRACTICAL SUITS AND FURS

FURS of all kinds, dressed and dyed in London, are increasing our export trade to Canada and the United States. Those for the home market must naturally be practical and economical, inexpensive furs designed for hard wear. Molho, of 5, Duke Street, Manchester Square, has an attractive collection of skins, very moderately priced. The bolero above, skilfully worked in opossum, is nine guineas, and there are others in beaver lamb for the same price. Hats are made to match many of the furs; the one above, in opossum, costs two guineas. Seal boleros are twelve guineas, and there are swing-back, full-length coats in Indian lamb.

EXPERT tailoring is one of the many British institutions that are adapting themselves to wartime conditions. Classic suits, like the model on the right from Burberrys in the Haymarket, are skilfully cut so that they will not date, and tailored for years of wear. The stripes here are cleverly used to give a slimming line, their severity broken by slanting pockets. This is a perfect "committee" suit, but if your war work takes you into the country, there are coats and skirts in Glen Urquhart checks, with raglan overcoats to complete very practical three-piece outfits.

Prints
FOR
SUMMER
BLOUSES
Becoming to all figures, this smart design is in Spot Crepe, the stitched panel front finished with strappings. White spots on navy, seatone, wine and red grounds.
Sizes 36, 38, 40 42/-
Larger size 47/6
Post orders receive prompt and careful attention.
Charming Blouse of printed crepe in a gay floral design, the original stitched front finished with little bows.
Sizes 36, 38 and 40 49/6
Larger size 55/9
Debenham & Freebody
LANgham 4444 WIGMORE ST., LONDON, W.1 (Debenhams Ltd.)


BY APPOINTMENT
TO H.M. KING GEORGE VI
'Quality Tells'
LIQUEUR SCOTCH WHISKY
VAT
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DISTILLERS.
LEITH, SCOTLAND
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BROWNING ON BRIDGE: DCCCXCVIII.

THE DEFENSIVE OVER-CALL.

IT is with great satisfaction that I quote from a recent article by one of our high authorities on contract. " Few bids are more valuable than the first over-call. The most valuable purpose served by the first over-call is to direct the lead. Many a contract in no-trumps is shut out by a lead-directing over-call. It is a defensive bid, made normally at the level of ' one ' or ' two.' "

For years the defensive over-call (*i.e.*, opening bidder, one heart; *next player*, one spade) has been written up and advocated in these notes. I have held, and of course still hold, that a *defensive* over-bid is one of the soundest bids at contract, always noting carefully that it *is* a defensive bid; that is, partner must note this carefully: he must not back up the bid on just normal strength; over-call bids must not be raised to dangerously high levels. If only this is thoroughly understood by the partnership, there is little or no risk entailed; but, on the other hand, there is plenty of security or game-saving possibilities about an over-call. All this seems to me obvious, yet in most places my views have been treated with scorn, and when an over-call meets with disaster, which, of course, *in common with every other kind of bid*, it must meet with every now and again, you would hear and read: " Ah, another of those over-calls. Serve them right! "

Two examples from duplicate are given by the writer I quote. Over an opening bid of one no-trump, next player bid two hearts at one table on—

SPADES—Q, Kn, x, x.
HEARTS—A, K, x, x, x.
CLUBS—Q, x, x.
DIAMONDS—Kn.

and shut out the no-trump contract. At the other table, the holder of this hand passed, and opponents bid and made three no-trumps!

N:
SPADES—x, x.
HEARTS—A, x, x.
CLUBS—Q, Kn, 10, x, x.
DIAMONDS—x, x, x, x.

W:
SPADES—Kn, 10, x, x, x,
HEARTS—K, 10.
CLUBS—A, x, x.
DIAMONDS—Kn, x.

E:
SPADES—K, x, x.
HEARTS—Kn, x, x, x.
CLUBS—x, x, x.
DIAMONDS—K, 10, x, x.

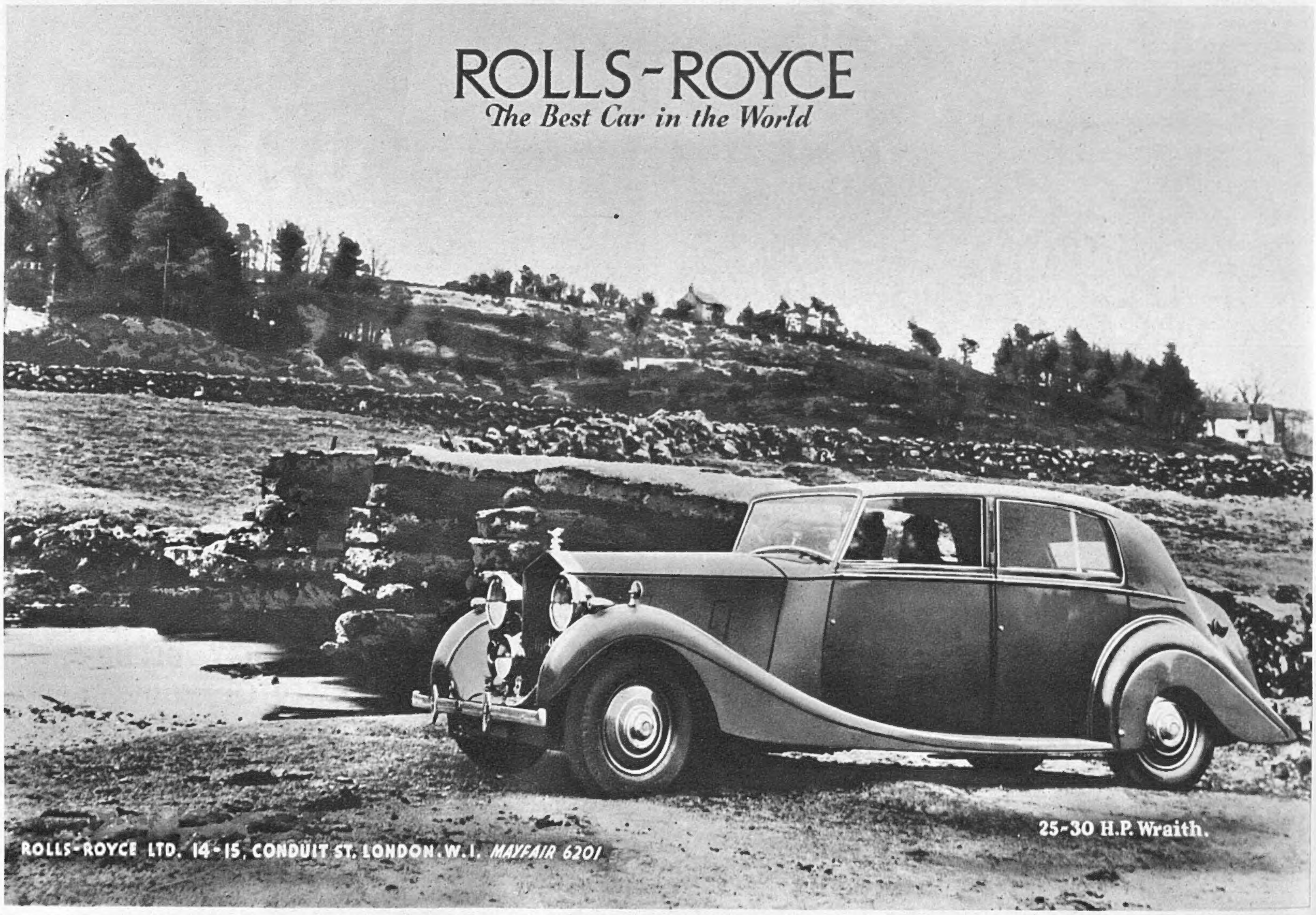
S:
SPADES—A, Q.
HEARTS—Q, x, x, x.
CLUBS—K, x, x.
DIAMONDS—A, Q, x, x.

South opened with one no-trump; West passed; North raised his partner, and ten tricks were made. At the other table, South opened one diamond; West bid two spades; North, three clubs; and East three spades, which closed the bidding. North was two down on the contract, but what is the loss of 100 points compared with saving the game? To give the opposition a free run of the bidding, with no interference, is just an absurdity. Personally, I think it is that terror of the vulnerable position that keeps many players silent when an over-call is essential. I, however, go further, and repeat, not only is a defensive over-call extremely valuable at all stages of the game, but also *defensive opening* bids would be sound contract propositions too! These, I fancy, will be introduced in course of time.

SOLUTION OF CROSS-WORD PUZZLE. APRIL 30.

ACROSS.—1. Dead-letter. 6. Stew. 10. Legatee. 11. Illapse. 12. Ilex. 13. Echo. 14. Waive. 16. Notables. 17. Danger. 21. Embryo. 23. Connotes. 26. Argus. 28. Undo. 29. Asti. 31. Knavish. 32. Padella. 33. Wash. 34. Serpentine.

DOWN.—1. Dalliance. 2. Augment. 3. Lots. 4. Trencher. 5. Editor. 7. Topping. 8. Where. 9. Flow. 15. Obey. 18. Anna. 19. Rusticate. 20. Sold a pup. 22. Beggars. 24. Toselli. 25. Euchre. 26. Askew. 27. Suit. 30. Eden.



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